

# The Nation

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## Events of the Week.

THE Irish Conference is arranged at last. The two concluding letters were admirable for their tact and temper. Mr. Lloyd George extricated himself from a difficult situation by setting aside the previous correspondence on the ground that others might read into it a meaning that Mr. de Valera himself excluded. Then, in terms to which nobody could object, he invited the Irish leaders to a conference in London on the 11th. Mr. de Valera's answer was not less happy. "Our respective positions have been stated and are understood, and we agree that a conference, not correspondence, is the most practical and hopeful way to an understanding. We accept that invitation, and our delegates will meet you in London on the date mentioned and explore every possibility of settlement by personal discussion." Thus, after many vicissitudes, the first stage in the negotiation has been successfully accomplished. There is no hampering or irritating formula; the atmosphere is favorable, and on both sides it is well understood that both countries ardently desire a settlement. That is one of the facts that will influence and control the discussion.

THE much-advertised speech of Mr. George at Inverness dealt with unemployment in terms of endearing platitudes. Nobody must starve so long as there is "a crust in the national cupboard," but we must "cut our coat according to our cloth even in the bleakest weather." A prolonged policy of doles is demoralizing. If possible, workers should be provided with employment in their own trades. The printing press must go slow if we are to stabilize exchange. It is first necessary to stabilize foreign policy. And that depends upon foreigners more than on ourselves. In conclusion, "If the nation is to pull through, we must pull together." And, in language which reminds us of a famous company prospectus of the period of the South Sea Bubble, he invited his hearers to put their confidence in a project "the nature of which shall hereafter be disclosed." In other words, three years after the coming of a peace which made this grave depression quite inevitable, the Government is just beginning to cast about for some expedients which shall enable it to postpone, and possibly escape, the wrath to come. What those expedients are Mr. George does not yet know. But while he was talking, the police were bludgeoning the unemployed in Central London.

THE Premier is careful to know nothing, but Sir A. Mond, chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Unemployment, is planning "to stimulate the channels of our great export trades" as a leading remedy for unemployment by Government-guaranteed credits. The line adumbrated follows pretty closely what is known as the Mountain scheme, which, had it been taken liberally in hand a year ago, might have averted much of our present trouble. Adequate credit supplied to traders by our banks, with Government guarantees against excessive risk on the long-time credits needed where goods are furnished to broken markets whose recovery they will serve to stimulate, is quite evidently the right remedy. But, as with other remedies, much depends upon the skilled application. As a direct palliative of unemployment it has great advantages over any scheme either of idle doles or of crude relief works, especially for skilled workers in the staple industries whose plant and labor are capable of making the required export goods. But the export trade thus stimulated should be confined to foreign markets otherwise unattainable, so as not to introduce publicly aided competition with ordinary export trade.

DR. NANSSEN made a deeply moving speech to the League of Nations Assembly on the Russian famine, but only Lord Robert Cecil supported his plea for Governmental credits. It contented itself—since all its delegates were tied by instructions, and the chief Allies have refused the appeal—with giving its blessing to private charity, and pointing out that Dr. Nansen's scheme has behind it the guarantee of his previous success in dealing with the war-prisoners. The horror of the tragedy is only deepened by the fact that both the Americas have a surplus of grain which they cannot dispose of. Canada has a record harvest, and in the Argentine the unmarketable maize is used to fire locomotives. Nor is this all. There have been since the slump great accumulations of all kinds of useful goods in this country which might be used, if they could be sent to Russia for barter, to elicit their surplus from the peasants in regions which have had a good harvest. Numbers of laden ships have been in the docks of London for months, it being useless to discharge their frozen meat. It seems incredible that with all this abundance at their command the Allied Cabinets should refuse the £5,000,000 among them for which Dr. Nansen asks on loan. We alone gave £100,000,000 to Denikin and Koltchak.

THE last fading hope centres in the official International Conference which met on Thursday in Brussels. Apparently the most it is likely to do is to evolve some scheme of trade credits, possibly with some idea of placing surplus war stores of an unmilitary kind at Russia's disposal. No one dares to suggest that these unsaleable things should go as a gift, though we are glad to see that the War Office will give some foodstuffs and medical stores, worth perhaps £100,000 to-day, through the Red Cross. But the intention seemingly is to make the loan (not the gift) of anything beyond this dependent on Russia's recognition of the Tsarist debt. One's gorge rises at this huckstering blackmail. What do we want with more debt, when even Mr. Churchill cries for cancellation? If Russia did acknowledge it, the only result would be that all her future exports

would be mortgaged in advance. Trade would stop dead, for she could buy nothing in return. But the Liberal leaders, the Churches, even the Labor leaders, are silent, and no voice sounds, save an eloquent article in the "Manchester Guardian," to shame our rulers out of their pettiness. This cannot and must not be the Government's last word.

THE mystery of the Hungarian plot in the Burgenland thickens. During the week-end M. Friedrich, ex-Premier and leader of the Hapsburg interest, made a defiant speech in which he flung down his gauntlet to the world, and announced that the Burgenland was going to exercise "self-determination," and would maintain her "independence." This utterance he made unhampered in Budapest itself. What is one to think, then, of the apparently complete surrender which Admiral Horthy, the Regent of Hungary and the personal rival of Friedrich, made by Tuesday, when he agreed to evacuate the Burgenland at last? It means, presumably, that the regular Magyar troops will march out. But what of the "bandits" and "White Terror" gangs, said to number 30,000, with artillery and motor transport, most of them credibly supposed to be Hungarian troops or gendarmes very slightly disguised? Will they march out? Vienna doubts it, and will shrewdly wait to occupy the country until the bandits have followed the regulars. It is not reassuring to find that the Allies have permitted the Hungarian *gendarmarie* to retain the chief town, Oedenburg. Italy is now proposing to mediate, and she, like the Tchech Premier Benesh, is said to intend that Hungary shall keep this far-from-Magyar town. At the last moment, however, comes the news that Great Britain refuses her consent to Italian mediation, which may not be wholly disinterested, since the more Nationalist and anti-Serbian elements in Italy desire an alliance with Hungary against Jugo-Slavia. The plain fact is that the "principal" Allies are not united, and in such conditions the Friedrichs, like the Korfantys and the Zeligowskis, find their opportunity.

THE Wirth Government has undoubtedly broken the force of the German reaction, and the disgust caused by the Erzberger murder has revealed, like the Kapp escapade, that Germany is solidly Republican and anti-militarist. One symptom worth noting is that Ehrhardt, perhaps the boldest and ablest leader of the post-war *condottieri*, has written a letter begging for amnesty, in which he makes a seemingly frank renunciation of his follies, and admits that his countrymen are against him. None the less, the Parliamentary situation of the Wirth Cabinet is not easy, and if it is to find a stable majority, it must be by expansion either to the Right or to the Left. The leaders of the Social Democratic Majority announced recently their readiness to permit the German People's Party (led by Herr Stresemann and Herr Stinnes) to enter the coalition on terms. These included a declaration that the party accepts the Republic, which it is willing to give, while reserving its monarchist preferences as a sacred matter for its heart and conscience. This concession, however, provoked a strong, and we think healthy, repudiation from the Socialist rank and file. It prefers the inclusion of the Social Democratic Minority, and it, in turn, has been stating its terms, which include the nationalization of the coal industry, a condition which the Liberals (Democrats) are unlikely to accept. The result of this *impasse* may be a new coalition with Herr Stresemann leading and all the Socialists left out. That would involve a defeat for the excellent influence of Dr. Wirth

and a swing to the Right. It is distressing to find that persistent statements are made in Berlin that a Stresemann Cabinet would be specially acceptable to London. Our jars with France would be peculiarly disastrous if they led to the promotion of German Nationalism.

WHAT really underlies this curious tangle is, we suppose, that some official tendencies in this country are alarmed by the *rapprochement* over reparations between Herr Rathenau and M. Loucheur. If that capitalist understanding between "big business" deepens, the Franco-German feud might be abated. Herr Rathenau, a large-minded, progressive, and pacific personality, always had such inclinations, and one recollects that our egregious Home Office once refused him a *visé* for London. Are there some clever little minds in and about Downing Street so busy with the balance of power that they desire to thwart a Franco-German understanding? It may be so; and yet the alternative is the continued dominance of the purely militarist school in France. On the whole, we think it is losing ground. The old Tiger came out of his lair the other day to growl, in neat but stinging epigrams, that his Treaty is being whittled away, and that the victory is being squandered. He may contemplate one last day's sport before the jungle closes over him by "downing" a Cabinet. But there is no perceptible response. M. Clemenceau and M. Poincaré are both renewing their assaults, but M. Briand, indolent and vacillating, goes on poisoning as comfortably as ever, and inclines just perceptibly towards the Left.

ONE cannot, in discussing the relations of two peoples, ignore the pathological symptoms. There is, as we argue elsewhere, grave reason for anxiety over the Anglo-American future; how grave it is one realizes only when one turns to American periodicals which are professedly pacifist. We have before us a recent issue of the "Freeman," a new and clever weekly, decidedly "high-brow" and "radical," which invites us to give our candid opinion about its revelations on an alleged British intrigue against American shipping. We are gravely told that Great Britain maintains in every country a secret organization whose business it is to influence the legislation of that country against its own interests, and in favor of British shipping. It is very active in America, and its agents may be found in the Shipping Board, if not in still higher places. If we doubt it—well, Senator La Follette has said so. Moreover, one knows, from a boastful article by Sir Gilbert Parker, how active British propaganda was during the war. Only a child would suppose that it has ceased its underground workings. There is a slump in American shipping, and we, as candid anti-Imperialists, are invited to denounce this British plot, and sympathize with a very sore America. We are indeed sorry, and even alarmed. For this is a sad and morbid case. Here is the "hidden hand" over again, but the victim is not, as commonly happens, a Jingo, but a Pacifist group. We invite the "Freeman" to note that the slump in shipping is world-wide. But, seriously, if Anglophobia is going to such mad lengths, in such unexpected quarters, we must be very careful in matters where there is a real case against us.

THE negotiations between Adly Pasha and Lord Curzon over the definition of Egypt's new status as an independent "ally" have been resumed in London, and are said to be running smoothly. It may well be so. But we incline still to the belief that the Adly Cabinet procured some show of support from sections of

the wealthier and more officially-minded class of Egyptians, mainly by a course of intimidation. The chief result is that the old cleavage—partly of race, partly of class—between the richer Egyptians, largely of Turkish descent, and the genuine Fellah mass, has reappeared. The accounts of the reception of the English Labor members make it quite clear that Zaghloul Pasha, violent though he may be in language, or perhaps because he is violent, retains the popular leadership. The result may be disastrous when Adly Pasha goes back with his Treaty and has to choose between a free election and defeat or a faked election and survival. Meanwhile, we would draw attention to the circumstantial though unconfirmed account in the "Daily Herald" of the hangings in Alexandria which followed the riots of June. In that affair, for which even the "Times" said that the Greeks were chiefly to blame, sixty-eight Egyptians, thirteen Greeks, and six other Europeans were killed. It is said that seven Egyptians (but no Greeks) were selected at random from the crowd for punishment. It is reported that the hanging (from one gallows) was unskilful, and the bodies of the first to die lay on the ground while their fellows waited for their turn. It sounds unpleasantly like Denshawai.

THE Safeguarding of Industries Act has already begun to produce its natural fruits—raised prices of imported goods; delay, uncertainty, and irritation among our merchants and manufacturers; increased officialism and inquisition, with very little yield of revenue. On the matter of key industries we are informed that about six thousand are already scheduled. In a letter to the "Times" the Secretary of the British Chemical Trade Association affirms that some two thousand of the number are not made in this country because it does not pay to make them. They will continue to be imported, and the tariff will be put on to the price which manufacturers who use them as materials in further productive processes will have to pay. Deliberately harassing British trade at a time like this will surely cost the Government more than it can hope to gain by this tricky introduction of protective duties. Meanwhile, the utter failure of the protective intention is proved by the greatly enhanced flow of German goods into this country. Dyes, chemicals, lamp-chimneys, stationery, toys, clocks, knives—all the bogey-goods are leaping our barriers. How should it be otherwise? In what other shapes can we take our share of reparation?

THERE are signs that the coal situation will be worse in the coming weeks than at any time since the June settlement. The increased winter demand will be nullified, so far as the miners are concerned, by the large stocks already accumulated. The highly technical dispute arising out of the clause in the settlement providing that the aggregate profits in any district in July and August shall be reckoned as a contribution to wages in September and October, has led to a pronouncement by Sir William Plender in favor of the miners. It is doubtful whether they will benefit from this in Wales and one or two other districts, because collieries are being closed down or put on short time, with the result that earnings disappear altogether, or are reduced to 30s. or £2 a week. In these badly stricken districts the position of the workers is growing desperate, and the failure of the starvation settlement three months ago to solve the coal problem is exhibited more clearly every day.

THE futility of the so-called conciliation machinery set up by the Government in place of the effective Agri-

cultural Wages Board is now manifest. The laborer suddenly finds himself deprived of all protection and safeguards. Even in the counties where agreement has been arrived at between the Farmers' Union and the laborers' unions the employers refuse to register the agreement. This deprives it of any legal force, and the less scrupulous farmers are not slow to drive bargains in the old fashion, taking advantage of growing unemployment to depress wages to the point of barest subsistence. The trouble is most acute in Norfolk, where some quite well-to-do farmers are demanding acceptance of a wage of 30s., with dismissal as the alternative. The union officials, who realize the helplessness of the workers, are striving to save something from the wreckage by negotiating agreements on a basis of 36s. to 40s. a week wherever possible, but their task is hard, and their influence is naturally declining.

IN the case of the expulsion of Dr. Oscar Levy from these shores the Home Office has confessed that though this is ordered, there is nothing against this generally respected author and scholar. It is merely that the law is an ass; and the Home Office, while knowing that, yet feels it a patriotic duty to make one long ear of the silly creature solemnly indicate an exit to a learned and friendly man. We will credit Mr. Shortt with smiling behind his hand as he draws public attention to the ridiculous nature of the Aliens Act, by staging this idiotic tableau. He knew quite well that in the case of a hairdresser, a pastrycook, or a waiter, nobody would care. Therefore he chose a scholar, who was also a sick man, for whom there was nothing but respect and goodwill in this country. That, said Mr. Shortt, will wake them up. Asked to explain itself, the Home Office, sticking solemnly to its part, points merely to Section 10 (1) of its precious Act; from which we gather that an absence from this country of Dr. Levy during the war, when he was in Switzerland working for the Allied cause, classes Dr. Levy technically as an enemy alien having no claim upon us, though he has resided here since 1894, and is officially disclaimed by his Fatherland. A petition is being presented to the Premier, and we shall look to him for his enlightened and friendly gesture.

THE Conference on Economic Recovery and World Peace, to be held at Caxton Hall next week, organized by the Fight the Famine Council and the Peace Society, will bring together a great variety of representative men from many countries. Church dignitaries from Hungary and Sweden meet our own Deans of Worcester and St. Paul's to discuss the spiritual bases of peace in Tuesday's opening session. On the two following days the grave economic problems pressing on the world form the subject matter: the World Depression and Unemployment, the Famine in Russia, Reduction of Armaments in relation to the League and the Washington Conference, and finally the Reparations Problem. Business men, economists, Labor leaders, and politicians from France and Belgium, Germany and Austria, Holland, Italy, Switzerland, will take part in the discussion. Among the foreign representatives we observe the names of Viscount Kano of Japan, M. Longuet of France, M. Krassin of Russia, Dr. Mühlön of Germany, and many other well-known persons. A public meeting on Thursday evening will be addressed by MM. Longuet and Vandervelde, Mr. Edo Fimmen, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the Rev. R. J. Campbell, Mr. J. M. Hogge, and General Birdwood Thomson.



## Politics and Affairs.

### THE ISSUES AT WASHINGTON.

THERE is a feeling in America that the approaching Washington Conference on Disarmament is regarded in this country rather lightly. There is, we think, some reason for that complaint. The competing interests are urgent and passionate. We are at the turning-point of destiny in our relations with Ireland; unemployment is a nightmare that might well obsess us to the neglect of every other theme; our finances are in disorder, and that is only an item in the race of all belligerent Europe towards bankruptcy; when we look abroad, across the distresses and unrest of nearer Europe, we see the agony of twenty millions of our fellow creatures on the Volga. In competition with these issues, the economic future in China, and the naval programmes which ultimately depend upon it, may seem remote and relatively inhuman concerns. One is often tempted to think that our material civilization, with all its multitudinous inter-connections, has evolved more rapidly than the human intelligence. It makes demands on our alertness and many-sidedness with which our wits and our sympathies cannot cope. And yet the issues at Washington may be decisive for our own destinies and for those of the whole civilized world within the next decade. The Prime Minister did not exaggerate when he spoke at Inverness of the coming Conference, "if it is wisely approached," as "one of those outstanding events which will affect human history for generations to come." In the other case, if wisdom fails on one side or the other, we are disposed to think that the Conference will be an even more outstanding landmark in history. A successful Conference will mean that the good but scarcely intimate relations of the British Empire with the United States will be widened into close and extensive co-operation; that the development of China will proceed without the violent rivalries among the Powers which have formed the history, for example, of Turkey; that the naval rivalry between us will be ended almost before it has begun. In the contrary event, if the Conference fails our relations with America will infallibly go on worsening; China will become an economic battlefield, and the naval competition may resemble our recent emulation with Germany in the passions it engendered and the disasters which it heralded.

That parallel, ominous though it is, is worth more than a moment's reflection. There is more than a superficial resemblance. Up to the last decade of the nineteenth century our relations with Germany were good, though not exactly intimate. She was a purely Continental Power which did not aspire to play a hand in world-policy. Gradually the rapid development of her industry forced her, by the usual logic, into economic Imperialism. Her accumulating capital sought distant outlets; here it "penetrated"; there it struggled for spheres of influence; elsewhere it acquired colonies. Entering late upon the scene of the familiar European rivalries, the new factor caused an enormous disturbance, and the process of adjustment was anxious and dangerous. For us there came a moment of choice. The easy, friendly, but not intimate, relationship had become impossible. The alternatives were close co-operation, even alliance, on the one hand, or open rivalry, and even enmity, on the other. Round the turn of the century both Powers vacillated. Mr. Chamberlain talked alliance; Count Hayashi and Lord Lansdowne discussed

the inclusion of Germany in the Anglo-Japanese alliance; Berlin inaugurated conversations for a general Anglo-German alliance, excluding only Asia from its scope. These proposals failed, and with their failure the scene was set for the world-war. The new German fleet, which might have reinforced our own, became the recognized opponent; we entered the hostile European group; in Morocco, Mesopotamia, and the Balkans the rivalry expressed itself in action.

America's case has also its economic root. She was, until the Great War, a borrowing Power. Her own capital was still, in the main, busied within her own borders. The fillip of the war and the needs of the belligerents wiped out her indebtedness and made her a creditor. She has now her surplus capital, which, by all the laws and habits of the industrial system, she wants to export. To be sure, it might still find employment at home, but in that case the rate of interest might fall. Whither shall it turn? The hypocrisy of the "mandate" system leaves little hope that these areas will be anything else than preserves for the victors. Turkey has been partitioned into spheres of interest. Russia is (we think foolishly) suspect and neglected. The confusions and risks of Central and Eastern Europe seem to alarm the American investor, who feels himself in a puzzling and barely sane environment. The field which beckons him is China. The decision has evidently been taken by the financial magnates, who usually control such matters, to concentrate on China, and a Bill that has just gone through Congress, regulating American companies in China and exempting them from taxation, is evidently designed to direct the flow of American capital thither. So far the economic fact, which is fundamental. America has become a Power which exports capital; will the usual phenomena of economic Imperialism follow—the rivalries, the armaments, and ultimately the decision?

That depends on us. The case here is a little worse than it was in our dealings with Germany. This is our year of choice, as 1901 was theirs. But in 1901 we were not the ally or even the friend of France. We are, however, the ally of Japan. Again, the Anglo-German naval rivalry, though it began with the German building programme of 1900, was nowhere near the level of Anglo-American competition—if competition it is to be—for already equality in capital ships is in sight. It is plainly impossible for America to go far in the process of "penetrating" China with her capital without coming into sharp conflict with Japan, if Japan continues to follow her programme of annexations, occupations, and claims that amount in principle to a demand for little less than a protectorate over the whole of China. Here is one of the situations which in the short but eventful history of economic Imperialism usually have meant war. Americans, we dare say, would resent the use of that term. They detest Imperialism. They would deny any political ambitions in China. They want, we believe sincerely, simply to do business with her and to help her by their excellent educational institutions to help herself. If "doing business" meant only exporting textiles and oil and typewriters to China there would be little danger. But it happens to mean building railways, opening mines, and operating through big syndicates of bankers and financiers. We know how that usually ends. If it is to end otherwise in China we must all of us see the danger and evolve a plan.

The first essential is to end the Japanese Alliance. British public opinion has been culpably slow to under-



stand this issue. Everyone realizes, of course, that we must not promise to back the Japanese in the event of war with America. But the real issue is whether we are going to continue to back Japan in her reckless career of expansion. The Alliance has served to cover and protect the annexation of Korea, the occupation of Manchuria, the push into Mongolia, the seizure of Vladivostok, the grabbing of Shantung, and much else of a less startling but equally objectionable kind. As Allies we cannot oppose, and must give at least moral, which might easily become material, support. We sympathize with a recent article in which the "New Republic" expressed its polite annoyance at the English talk about extending and broadening the Alliance, so as to include America. In the first place, America dreads alliances. In the second place, she dislikes the whole trend and record of this alliance. In the third place, she opposes any combination of Powers which stands over and outside China to dictate to her, to "protect" her, and to exploit her. There is nothing to be done but to end the Alliance. If we are going to co-operate with America in the Far East, it must be upon a wholly new basis. The partition which is the ultimate logic of Japanese policy must be renounced; spheres of interest, including our own dangerous claims in the Hinterland of Hong Kong, must be abandoned. We incline to think that foreign capital, instead of seeking exclusive zones for its operations, must be compelled to form international syndicates. Above all, China herself must be an equal partner in any series of treaties which define the Open Door. That done, disarmament is easy. Unless it is done, Washington may repeat Algeciras and The Hague in the proclamation of a moral failure.

### THE AGRICULTURAL LABORER.

It is significant of the perverse and artificial system into which we have cast our economic relationships that the early harvest, on which most persons would suppose that we can congratulate ourselves, is for the agricultural laborer the climax of his misfortunes. In many an English village the sight of fields ploughed in September brings terror and despair into the laborer's home. The dry summer means that there are starved root crops; hedging in many places has been done already, and the prospect of employment in the long winter months is worse than it has been for many years. The economic system which seemed to our ancestors to produce such a wonderful harmony of interests, brings gain to the farmer at the same time that it brings misery to the laborer, and if Burke were to write his famous pamphlet on scarcity to-day he would find it difficult, with all his rich imagination, to put a plausible face on his happy and confident conclusion: "In the case of the farmer and the laborer, their interests are always the same, and it is absolutely impossible that their free contracts can be onerous to either party."

It is with this prospect before him that the agricultural laborer finds himself deprived of all the advantages he had gained during and since the war. With one step we have gone back to the conditions against which all Liberals were in revolt in 1913. What are the prospects of small holdings after half of England has changed hands at inflated prices? What are the prospects of decent cottages under the inexorable realism of Sir Alfred Mond? And reforms that had brought to the

laborer something to be prized above wages, a status that enabled him to meet his employer with the spirit and quasi-independence of a town workman in a highly organized industry, have gone the way of all the other blessings of the new world. The formula of the new policy is well given in the expression used by the Minister of Agriculture, that farmers and laborers must fight it out among themselves. This is a rather more combative metaphor than the favorite metaphor of our grandfathers, who said that wages must be left to find their own level, but it comes to much the same thing in the end. The Agricultural Wages Board provided machinery by which employers and workers together could exercise some control over the conditions of their industry. By its means a minimum wage could be enforced on the most recalcitrant and reactionary farmers; the larger ideas of the more enlightened farmers could be brought into play, and in practice it resulted that the industry was laying down a code of hours as well as of wages, securing to the laborer the eagerly desired half-holiday, and safeguarding him against the danger that the farmer would exact an exorbitant rent for his cottage. Mr. Dallas, the energetic Secretary of the Workers' Union, and an active member of the Board, does not exaggerate when he says that the Wages Board used its opportunities to make a revolution in the working conditions of agriculture.

Everybody who knew the circumstances of the agricultural laborer heard with consternation that the Wages Board was to go, but Ministers argued that it was a mistake to suppose that the laborer would be badly hit by the abolition of the Board, for its place would be taken by voluntary Conciliation Committees. Mr. R. B. Walker, the Secretary of the Agricultural Laborers' Union, stated, in an interview published in the "Daily News" a few days ago, that in only sixteen counties have these Committees concluded wages agreements, and that in none of these counties will the farmers register the agreements at the Ministry of Agriculture. The importance of this omission is obvious, for there are between 20 and 30 per cent. of the farmers who are not in the Farmers' Union, and any of these non-union farmers can ignore an unregistered agreement. The temptation will often be irresistible, because there will be great numbers of unemployed laborers, and farmers who think they have been compelled to pay excessive wages during the last three years will seize their opportunity. Among no body of employers is the belief that anti-waste and low wages are two names for the same ideal state of things more general or more deeply rooted. And we imagine that the experience of the Wages Board, which would in time have effected a great change in the outlook of this most conservative society, has temporarily had the opposite effect of hardening these prejudices. For Sir Daniel Hall showed in his "Pilgrimage of Farming," as Mr. Lennard showed in his "English Agricultural Wages," that farmers had preferred inefficient labor to well-paid labor, and the consequences of that choice are familiar to every student of a sweated industry. Sir Daniel Hall put the truth in an apt phrase: "The farmer's general complaint is that the majority of his men are not worth their wages, and that is probably true; they will have to be more highly paid before they will earn their money." But a class of workers whose physique, ambitions, and standards both of life and work have been steadily depressed for generations by the policy of sweating, does not turn into a brisk, competent, industrious army of workers by the mere stroke of the pen which writes "fifty" instead of "twenty" in a wages sheet. The effect of introducing good

wages into a badly paid industry is gradual and cumulative; the law it follows is, unlike the other law with which the farmer is familiar, the law of increasing returns. Consequently the farmer who has been grumbling about his wages bill the last two years has had no opportunity of seeing the results; for these he would have to wait perhaps ten years. All that he knows is that he has been paying higher wages to men whom he thought inefficient before, and whom he thinks inefficient still. He does not consider that old bad traditions cannot be got rid of at a moment's notice, and that the improvement of the quality of work must follow at some interval the improvement of the prospects of the worker. He has deliberately made agriculture an occupation in which men of enterprise and spirit could find no attraction, and he pays the penalty. Thus whereas it would have been possible to develop through the Wages Board a system that would have altered completely the vicious character of the agricultural industry, the laborer is to be thrown back into the old conditions at a moment when the farmer is more convinced than ever that sweating is the right way to conduct his industry.

The Wages Board might have been expanded in time into an organization that would have secured the worker not merely against sweating, but also against unemployment, and would have improved his efficiency with his prospects. The Board has been abolished before the farmer has had the benefit of better wages, and in the adjustments that are coming the laborer will be tempted to stand out, in some cases unreasonably, on the question of wages, just because he has lost everything and dare not concede anything; while the farmer, who in many cases has bought his farm and thinks that he has been swindled with the abandonment of the guaranteed prices, will find his easiest satisfaction in taking it out of the laborer. Of the issue of such a conflict under such conditions there can, we fear, be little doubt.

### A LAKE SCHOOL OF LIBERALS.

THE informal conference held last week at Grasmere by some hundred Independent Liberals to discuss a constructive industrial policy, bears testimony to a widespread recognition throughout the country that, if Liberalism is to survive and to continue its work as an organized political force, it must face more boldly than hitherto the new facts of the economic situation here and in the business world. Most of the attendants were North of England business men, who brought close practical experience to the test of new social theories. But there was a fairly representative sprinkling of men and women from all parts of the country, a score or more being prospective candidates for Parliament. Though the gathering was in no sense a "cave" within the party, no official members were invited, because it was desired to preserve the fullest measure of individual freedom for deliberations not designed to formulate a party programme, but to discuss certain practical economic problems in the light of Liberal principles and sentiments. Nobody pretended that Liberals could compete straightway with the bold, idealistic formulas of our Labor Party. But it was held that Liberalism must and ought to have some definite economic contribution to offer to the world.

With this end in view the conveners of the conference put into the forefront of debate the questions of nationalization and public control of fundamental industries, the demands of the workers for participation in

industrial administration and in profits, the problem of Trusts, and the crucial issues of our time, unemployment and international finance.

Though no resolutions or other formal tests of opinion were taken, the sense of the meeting was quite clear on certain important topics. There was a general acceptance of the view that the autocratic government of industry by the representatives of capital was no longer feasible or defensible. The manual and the brain workers in each industry and business must have a definite share in the control, according to their needs and capacities, and the consumer must have his interests safeguarded either by the State or by direct representation. Employees must have a more substantial stake in the prosperity of the business, must be in some sense "partners," and adequate provision must be made against their unemployment. There was a general willingness that capitalists and employers should share with workers their economic power; that owners who were "sleeping partners" should be put upon a fixed dividend, leaving the proceeds of successful trading to be divided among the active contributors, management, technical staff, and workers, with due security for consumers.

But when it came to working out plans for such reconstruction, some grave difficulties were disclosed. There was considerable disagreement, both as to what the workers really wanted in the way of altered "status" and as to their capacity to take part usefully in the work of administration and management. But even those who thought less highly of the ability of workers' representatives to do good work on directorates or on joint committees, favored these measures as necessary to establish confidence and secure harmonious relations. The broad drift of sentiment was thus favorable to an industrial democracy in which all interests should be represented. The definitely "business" experience of members expressed itself, however, in two judgments: first, a conviction that the larger and more critical tasks of industrial management must remain, as now, in the hands of expert and specialized ability; secondly, a conviction that the workers as a whole would accept this view, provided the general atmosphere of suspicion which prevails at present could be dispersed. For this result to be attained what is wanted is "a square deal with all the cards on the table." Compulsory publication of accounts, with detailed information enabling all the interested parties to know the actual working of a business in its results and the distribution of its product, was felt to be of the first importance as the condition of every structural reform. Such amendments of the Companies Acts as are needed to secure this object should be made without delay. This reform, taken along with direct representation of workers upon the various grades of committees, from the workshop to the National Industrial Council which should adjust the relations of trade with trade and regulate the larger matters of national industrial policy, would, perhaps, secure as much industrial order and self-government as the psychology of industry admits, and the nation is at present willing to accord.

By this latter qualification we refer to the very marked desire of the majority of these Liberals to keep State interference and control of industry at a minimum. Even the enforced publication of accounts was resented in some quarters as establishing a Paradise of public accountants. Suspicion of bureaucracy was, indeed, a frequently recurring note throughout the conference. More than any other cause it turned the general sense of the meeting against full nationalization of mines and rail-

ways as unwise experiments in public management; and, even in the discussion of Trusts, there was a strong preference for relying upon informed public opinion as a sufficient check upon abuses of monopolistic power, instead of drastic regulation by the State.

Speaking in general terms, the conference seemed to favor large modifications of the present capitalistic system, in order to give a greater stake in industry to the workers, but to separate itself from the Socialism of the Labor Party in limiting State intervention to the existing accepted sphere of minimum conditions for labor, incorporated in Factory, Insurance, and Trade Board legislation, and the new proposed safeguards of the consumer. It is, indeed, probable that many would go further and confer some definite administrative and even legislative powers upon a National Industrial Council. But a very marked feature of the discussion was the almost complete failure to recognize that society was a directly operative force in the determination of economic values, and that the State, as its economic instrument, performed important productive services which gave it a right to draw revenue from the product of industry. This rejection of what, properly defined, is a sound social principle, showed itself markedly throughout a discussion of profit-sharing schemes, most of which rested upon the implicit assumption that any "surplus" to be divided, after payment of minimum wages to labor, management, and capital, should be absorbed in additional remuneration to the owners of these factors of production. Few seemed disposed to ask where the State came in, how it was to obtain its necessary revenue, and whether it might not possess a prior claim upon the surplus gains, which were of the nature of economic rents, monopoly profits, windfalls, and the like. Criticism did, indeed, expose weaknesses in the practical attempt to set up profit-sharing as a general solvent for labor troubles. But the present unpopularity of the State and its officials operated, both in this and in the urgent matter of unemployment, to disparage unduly the part which here, as in every modern nation, the State must play as a controlling factor in industrial life. For, though it is undoubtedly good policy to throw upon each trade a real obligation to keep its reserve army out of its own resources, that trade individualism cannot be carried so far as to rule out the final and superior obligation of the State to make good, out of the general resources of the nation, all separate trade inadequacy, especially when, as at present, unemployment flows mainly from the wasteful and destructive policy pursued by Governments.

The discussion was kept throughout upon a practical level. There was no straining after vote-catching formulas or plausible panaceas. As was proper at this stage, criticism was indulged. But most of the participants felt that the ground had been cleared for a really constructive policy, the outlines of which were already apparent in the shape of representative economic institutions, with full publicity of information and free discussion as their *modus operandi*. Other conferences, it is hoped, will be arranged, with the possible aid of a research body which shall work upon the specific proposals of industrial reform, and not merely on a national, but on an international basis. For one of the most cheering notes of this Grasmere gathering was its enthusiastic acceptance of the genuinely Liberal policy put before it by Mr. Layton in favor of the early and unconditional cancelment of our Allies' indebtedness to us, and a drastic reduction of German reparation, as first and essential steps towards the restoration of sound finance, the true remedy for world-depression.

## Life and Letters.

### THE CURSE OF ORNAMENT.

At last! At last our report has been believed. At last to someone else the truth which we have so long proclaimed has been revealed. Time and again in this very paper, ever since its foundation fourteen-and-a-half years ago, the present writer has denounced an abomination which threatens to stifle his own beloved University of Oxford, but which no Royal Commission has frustrated, no Hebdomadal Council attempted to restrain. How often has he joyfully imagined himself stealing from one lovely quadrangle to another, on a dark autumn evening, while "Tom" was peeling the curfew sound, swinging slow with sullen roar! Wrapt in his ample gown, ready to smite once and smite no more, a two-handed engine is hidden. The porter is passed with safety. Footsteps die along the cloister. From rooms above, "John Peel" brays unsteadily. A murmur that may possibly be Greek comes from the Senior Common Room. He is unobserved. He uncovers a hefty axe, and lays it to the root of the evil. One fine swing. A sharpened blade gleams in the tremulous lamplight. It falls. At a blow the vegetable octopus is dis severed from its foul root for ever and for ever. Magdalen he takes first, because there the abomination is most vile, and to have destroyed it there alone would glorify a lifetime. Then in turn he speeds to Wadham, to Trinity, to St. John's, to Worcester, to Brazenose, to Univ., to Merton, to the Meadow Buildings of the House; nor, for the first time in his life, does he forget even Jesus. Before midnight all is accomplished, and Oxford again is free.

Next, in his dream, he settles down to await events. For the first day or two the change is gradual and small. Then the porters and gardeners begin to wonder what's the matter. For years they have watched those creepers crawling, but now, as another poet has sung, the blighted blighters seem to have got the blight. They droop; they fade. Young ladies fear the drought must have affected the poor dear things. The manufacturers of picture postcards observe that the charming scarlet and other autumnal tints are scarcely so brilliant this year as usual. American visitors feel that they have been done out of their dollars. They "have a hunch" that the Middle Ages were no such mighty catch after all. Week by week the pestilent foliage withers and dies. Every evening, in his dream, the present writer creeps round and gives it a pull. The loathly chokeweed comes away in armfuls, in swathes, in square yards, in rods, poles, and perches. High flare the Guy Faux bonfires. The Christmas hearths shed a goodly savor of faggots. By New Year's Day not a vestige of the obliterating fiend remains. Oxford stands once more in noble cleanliness and purity. The outlines of her architecture are again revealed. Again her grey and yellow stones are free to breathe and bask in the clear light of the day, or to take the shadows of the clouds.

It was a dream—too sweet a dream for earthly fulfilment. The course of the world called the dreamer to other fields—to fields upon which no such palms are won. But this week he rejoices to perceive an avenger arising from his aged bones. The "Times" last Monday had an article such as he would love to have written. Let us take but one paragraph from that admirable indictment of the modern Oxford don:—

"The great offender, more noxious, even, than the ivy itself, is the Virginia Creeper (*Ampelopsis Veitchii*), which, like the hundred-handed Briareus, sends forth its suckers in every direction. It envelops its prey in



a cloak of cinque-foil, green in summer, scarlet in autumn, in winter a leafless network of bedraggled twigs. It is a veritable 'lair of slugs,' harboring hosts of unwanted guests, 'whole civilities,' as Sir Thomas Browne says, 'of little citizens.' Its small adhesive pads, as the botanists call them, without sound or gesture cement its tendrils to the uncomplaining walls, hiding from sight stone turned by time to every shade of orange and palest gold."

What triumph it is when someone who can thus speak rises upon our side at last! After this, will no one rid us of this pestilent plant? What distinction for the present Vice-Chancellor to process from college to college, attended by his Proctors, and demand from the Head of each college to be shown where the tap-roots spring! In front of the procession would march the Senior Bulldog, bearing the keenest axe that Sheffield could produce, joyfully paid for by the present writer, whose name and address the Vice-Chancellor can obtain from the Editor. If the Proctors took off their gowns to the business, one day's honest toil would finish it. Term by term, released from obscure complexes and encumbrances, the soul of the University would rise to finer purity of thought and action. The light of a new illumination would extend throughout the educated classes of the country. Thence it would permeate, in the beautiful manner of light, down to the visible darkness of the Lower Middle, and even manual workers in time would share its blessing. Bit by bit, the silly ornaments of the nation would fade and flee away as evil dreams. Like forty maids with forty brooms, the light of beauty would sweep them off. The frippery crowded on mantel-shelves and tables, the vases, the framed photographs, the china plates affixed to walls, the tufts of exotic grasses in the corners, the lumps of stone or glass hung round the necks of women, or round their wrists, or nailed to the lobes of their ears, the flowers painted on the panels of doors and cupboards, the adornments daubed upon the surface of walls, the spiky gables and uncouth angles of a Garden Suburb—all would pass away, with all their trumpery. The very semblance of our literature would be affected. No longer would critics lick their lips over passages of "beautiful style." No longer would they suppose the "Imagery" to make the poem, or leave unconsidered the purport, the design, the architecture of literature, while they dwelt lovingly upon some pretty phrase or metaphor, some precious little word or line, by which they sought to estimate a work stern as a Norman keep in conception, and otherwise as straight and plain in form.

As we write, we are suddenly reminded that twenty-five years ago this week, William Morris died. In the minds of most people, at all events in his lifetime, his name was certainly connected with ornament and decoration. Morris wall-papers, Morris chintzes, Morris furniture, Morris poems—all were decorative and ornamental. Many survivors can remember how his patterns of interlacing leaves used to crawl over finely proportioned walls, much as the accursed Virginia Creeper crawls over Magdalen. In his youth and early manhood he certainly took a strange delight in crowding decoration upon every blank space he could find. He seemed to have no other outlet for his immense vitality, and as he could pour out decorative stuff in patterns or tapestry or verse with amazing ease, he thought it the right and natural thing for him to do. He could have gone on decorating surfaces for ever and ever. There was a feminine thread in his nature, and that was probably why his friends called him "Topsy," though he always preferred to be taken for a jolly sea-dog. How many pretty and lamentable crimes have been committed in his name! Think of the choking pages of decorated books, crammed with patterns

to the very edges, and printed in illegible type! Think of all the self-conscious ornamentation, the deadly picturesqueness, the imitative struggles that perhaps still linger in the suburbs of culture! Such influences and results were redeemed only by the finer vitality and sterner beauty of his later years—some ten or twelve years in all. We remember the time when culture used to sigh over Morris because he "gave up to party what was made for man." Exactly the reverse was true. He gave to man what otherwise he might have thrown away upon an æsthetic circle.

The salutary change came in the middle 'eighties with his conversion to what was then called Socialism. Himself finding his only true pleasure in all forms of productive work, he suddenly realized that to the immense majority of the working people their work brought no pleasure at all. As he said in his "Useful Work v. Useless Toil," work can give no pleasure unless it is done, not for profit, but for livelihood. Without usefulness and variety in work there can be no art:—

"I mean that side of art which is, or ought to be, done by the ordinary workman while he is about his ordinary work. This art no longer exists now, having been killed by commercialism. While it lasted, everything that was made by man was adorned by man, just as everything made by Nature is adorned by her. The craftsman, as he fashioned the thing he had under his hand, ornamented it so naturally and so entirely without conscious effort, that it is often difficult to distinguish where the mere utilitarian part of his work ended and the ornamental began."

From this definition of ornament it is but a step to Morris's warning to the Art Students in Birmingham (February 21st, 1894):—

"To the medieval craftsman generally, ornament was only incidental. If his ornament was not good (which by the way it almost always was), at least he was making a shoe, or a knife, or a cup, or what not, as well as ornament. But you who make nothing but ornament, please to remember that a piece of white paper, or an oak panel, is a pretty thing, and don't spoil it."

One little step further, and we have the last word that this deponent heard Morris say: "After all, plain whitewash is the most beautiful mural decoration." That is the message for all of us, from Oxford dons downwards, to remember. Speaking of Samuel Butler once, the present writer said (and nobly did Butler deserve the praise): "He touched nothing from which he did not strip the ornament." What an epitaph for every artist, for every writer, for every man and woman!

## THE LANCASHIRE HOLIDAY.

A FOREIGNER visiting Lancashire this summer would have gone prepared for all the symptoms of widespread distress. There had been a stoppage lasting several weeks in the coal trade, the cotton mills had been working short time, and the trade prospect was about as disconsolate as it could be. The tremendous machine that symbolizes the life, the power, and the wealth of Lancashire had been idle, and nobody could say when it would be working again at full power. This arrest of industrial energy had had one delightful consequence, for with the clean atmosphere the Lancashire hills were uncovered to the naked eye, and you could see the setting of the industrial towns with the moors and farms lying beyond them as they had been seldom seen in the lifetime of this generation. The Industrial Revolution was there on the map before you; a journey from Manchester to Blackburn was like a romantic lesson in history. In this unemployed Lancashire it would have been natural to expect the sombre atmosphere of foreboding that Cooke

Taylor described on his visit to the unemployed Lancashire of 1842; the faces of Lancashire sad, anxious, overcast. But a foreigner would have found, to his astonishment, that with all this unemployment and uncertainty Lancashire was taking her holidays as usual. The trains that carry industrial Lancashire to the seaside were as full and as frequent as ever, and the holiday clubs were paying out on their customary scale. The Oldham holiday clubs paid out a quarter of a million. The cloud of Europe's fear hanging over them, the Lancashire workman and his family took their week at the sea, with as light a heart as they would when the prospects of trade were rosy and the danger of unemployment too remote to enter into one's calculations.

These holidays are known as the wakes because they were originally the celebration of the vigil or the eve of the day sacred to the saint to whom the parish church was dedicated. But it is only in modern times that they have been organized on their present elaborate plan, the weeks between June and September being divided among the chief towns, so that the workpeople of all these different towns can take their week in the Isle of Man or at Blackpool, Morecambe, or Rhyl. The brilliant idea occurred to Mr. Belloc when a young man that if the Lancashire workman would forgo his holiday for one year he could buy up some of the principal cotton mills, and so a peaceful revolution would be effected, turning the proletariat into owners and laying the foundations of the distributive State. He put this idea before Lancashire audiences, but Lancashire was cold to it. For the textile worker has a different scale of values. The holiday is the institution on which his life revolves; it is the principal object for which he saves. We are familiar with the Scotsman who saves in order to see his son a minister; with the Irishman who saves that he may own his little plot; with the Frenchman who saves that he may become a person of property. The Lancashire workman puts a good deal of money into the cotton mills, and in some towns there is a regular system by which the mill is a kind of bank to the weaver or spinner who wants to invest. A good deal of working-class money was drawn in during the wild gambling of last year that has helped to produce the present difficulties of the industry. But these workmen do not invest with any idea of controlling the industry. It is merely that the mill is an obvious and familiar form of investment; the workman knows all about it, and he prefers to risk his money in a business with which he feels at home rather than trust to some enterprise of which he knows little. But the first thing for which he saves is the wake, and it is clear from the experience of this summer that this is the last thing he will sacrifice.

This is a very interesting phenomenon, and it explains and illustrates a good deal of English history. A Frenchman, writing at the time of the Chartistists, said that English insurrections were not like French, "*une excitation du cerveau*." You do not find "*une excitation du cerveau*" except among people who either resent their lot or picture an ideal state of society that is very different from the society they know. We fancy that there was more of this temper in the Chartist movement than the French observer discerned. The factory system was still modern, and the worker, on whom it fell with such savage force, thought wistfully of a past that looked soft and gentle in the blue of distance. But there is certainly little of this spirit in the Lancashire worker of to-day. He accepts the system into which he was born, and his father and grandfather before him; he does not quarrel with the main conditions of his life; if he pictures an ideal, it resembles in the main the sort of society that he knows; he does not save and stint himself that his son

may find his way into something else; on the contrary, he sees no reason why his son should not follow in his own footsteps and be content with the education and the prospects that satisfied his father. But there is one thing on which he insists, and that is that he shall have his share of the enjoyment of the world, and by enjoyment he means football, cinemas, music, and the week at the seaside. The writer asked one of the trade union leaders in Lancashire if he found in his union many workmen who were interested in the idea of democratic control of industry. "Thank God," was the answer, "we have no idealists." The demand made by the ordinary cotton-worker to-day is limited to this demand for his share of pleasure. He does not think of his life as hell, and of some other kind of life as heaven; he thinks of his life as quite tolerable so long as he can secure certain amenities, and he is determined that other people called his employers, who are extraordinarily like him in their tastes, shall not deprive him of them. That is why, amid all the losses that threaten him, the worker is not going to give up one advantage that he has gained from the war, the shorter working day. A very common saying among soldiers during the war when they were asked about the future was: "I am going back to the mill, but I am not going to work the old long hours. I am going to have my pleasure like the boss." That resolution will be a much stiffer obstacle to the ideas of the big business men who want long hours and the old methods than all the volume of revolutionary feeling imagined by the "Morning Post" in its worst nightmares.

The Lancashire worker is thus in essence very much the normal Englishman. He belongs to a conservative, established system. Some Englishmen have grievances that they nurse with passionate indignation; some have ideals that they cherish with passionate devotion. But the ordinary Englishman asks from life what the cotton-worker asks: his ideal is not "the good life," but a good time; not success, or glory, or wealth, or the service of an idea, or the spread of truth, or the furtherance of justice, but his share of pleasure. That is why the "Morning Post" and the "Daily Herald" alike make so little of him. He reacts to emotions, but he does not live on them; he can hate for an hour, but not for eternity. This temper produces the atmosphere in which a Test Match seems more important than a European catastrophe, and a cinema more interesting than a revolution. We have evolved from it the easy-going, unself-conscious Englishman who makes his way about the world with a careless, tolerant, manly attitude to the difficulties and dangers of life, a blind eye for the most part to its meaning, its beauty, and its wonders, and a habit of behaving tolerably to those he meets. He responded to the special demands of the war more easily than the men of most other races. We shall see how he will answer to the needs of the emergencies that are now to test all the leading nations of the world.

### "THE INDEX NUMBER."

THOUGH few people understand what Index Numbers are, how they are composed, and what they are worth, they are beginning to exercise a powerful influence upon public opinion and sentiment. Business men watch with anxiety the movements of wholesale prices given by the "Economist" and the "Statist," the wage-rates in important trades are made to vary with the Board of Trade figure for the cost of living, and Labor conflicts turn more and more upon these evidences of divergence between price and wage movements. It is, therefore,

important to know how much reliance can be placed upon these Index Numbers. Professor Bowley is their admitted master. No one better understands their little ways, and the spurious accuracy of their official poses. In "Wages and Prices in the United Kingdom, 1914-1920," (Clarendon Press, 10s. 6d. net) he presents an account of their operation in measuring the movements of prices and wages from the beginning of the war to the summer of 1920.

Ordinary observation taught most of us that the war-period was one of economic strength and prosperity for the great body of the working classes in this country. It is generally held that wages and working-class allowances absorbed a larger proportion of the national income, and that the average actual standard of living was raised. This prosperity, with some qualifications, lasted until the autumn of 1920. This opinion was a rough generalization of observed facts relating to the more expensive dressing of the workers and their children, their full employment, better feeding (in spite of special food shortages), expenditure upon amusements, and so forth. Low infant mortality, decline of Poor Law relief, and many other indications reinforced this view.

The more exact investigation of wages and prices here presented bears out upon the whole this popular view:—

"So far as a generalization is possible, we may state that the growth of *rates of wages* generally lagged behind that of prices, but *earnings*, in those very numerous cases where piece-rates or overtime gave facilities for additional work and pay, increased more rapidly than prices from the outbreak of war to the Armistice."

The post-war rise of prices and some reduction in earnings, though not of wage-rates, soon began to undermine the war-standard:—

"There can be no doubt that some sections (especially the worst paid) of the working classes were better off in the summer of 1920 than before the war, and it is probable that other sections were worse off. It is not possible to decide whether the average of all wages, measured in purchasing power, had risen or fallen."

This last sentence is an admission of the special weaknesses which beset these economic Index Numbers. Some of these defects are normal and inherent in the subject-matter. Such are the divergences in "weighting," as shown in comparing the wholesale figures of the Board of Trade with those of the "Statist" and the "Economist," and the impossibility of dealing with the innumerable changes of quality and composition of the various articles from whose prices the average is computed. And when we turn to the purchasing power of money, we meet corresponding difficulties, first, as to the proportionate importance assigned to different groups of articles, *e.g.*, food, clothing, rent, in the "cost of living" of the various grades of workers; secondly, as to the changes in modes of living which involve increases or decreases of expenditure on different articles. We very often come to what is little better than guess-work. A notorious instance is the factor "Other items," which was made to rank at only 4 per cent. in the working-class budget of 1914, though apparently including "insurance and subscriptions of all kinds, cleaning materials, replenishment of utensils, travelling, amusements, newspapers, tobacco, and beer." The last two items alone must have considerably exceeded the 4 per cent. allowance.

These difficulties, however, were aggravated by the interference of the war with supplies and with prices, when Governmental control, price-fixing, rationing, taxation, and subsidies, all entered in to affect prices, and to alter in many instances the quality of articles.

Retail price-figures were greatly disturbed by these causes.

Professor Bowley has not shirked any of these difficulties, but has done all that is possible to "allow" for them in the skilful interpretation of the tables he presents. He examines the different groups of prices upon which the wholesale and retail indices are built, and comments upon the chief points in the history of each movement. Similarly with wage-rates, he takes the chief trades and traces the changes brought about by bargaining, control, or Trade Board action. In an important chapter on the "General Movement of Wages," he enlarges and supports the judgment we have already cited as to the effect of war-experience upon working-class standards. The tables show a general tendency for unskilled wages to approximate to skilled, while at the same time there was a levelling-up of country to town rates in some industries. The evidence of the relative rise of laborers' rates in the building trades and in agriculture is quite remarkable.

Professor Bowley, though sticking closely to his job, the setting forth and interpretation of the statistical evidence, occasionally allows some wider expression of opinion to appear. He evidently regards some of the present wage-rates as excessive in view of the low national production. It is a pity that the matter at his disposal did not enable him to do something towards the measurement of family earnings during the war, so as to help towards a consideration of the temporary change in distribution of class incomes which undoubtedly took place.

## Letters from Abroad.

### THE ASSAM TEA-GARDEN TROUBLE.

To the Editor of THE NATION & THE ATHENÆUM.

SIR,—Many weeks have to pass for letters and magazines to come and go from India, and usually it is hardly worth while commenting on a letter which is several weeks old. Furthermore, you made your own correct comments on this particular letter about the tea-garden trouble in Assam. But I happened to be on the spot throughout the whole of the disturbance, and your readers may like to have some of my own impressions at first hand. When I questioned the laborers who had fled from the tea-gardens, the almost invariable answer of men and women alike was that their wages were 1½d., or else 2d., per day, and I am inclined to think they were, in a great measure, telling the truth. The usual recruitment each year for the tea-gardens is 12,000 to 13,000; and each new recruit costs the managers anything between £8 to £10 for importation. But in the year 1919 the scarcity in the chief recruiting area (the Gorakhpur district) was so great that between 100,000 and 120,000 laborers were recruited at an almost nominal figure. The tea industry was then prospering, and the opportunity of getting recruits so cheaply was not lost; the inevitable danger of such excessive recruitment was not anticipated. In the year 1920 a depression in the tea trade began, and this depression grew worse and worse. Orders were received from London that only fine pluckings were to be taken, and expenses on a very large number of estates were cut down to a minimum. What happened (as far as I could gather at first hand from the laborers) was this. The daily task is usually reckoned at 4d. per day. But this task was not given to all, as there was not enough work to go round. That is to say, on a large number of estates the laborers were kept hanging on, with a mere pittance, till better times should come again.

Since the days when indentured labor was abolished and the worst evils of professional recruiting were aban-



doned—days which have made the names of "indenture" and "recruiter" to be words of dread in Upper India—the condition of the laborers in the Assam tea-gardens has improved. The one evil that has not been eradicated has been the immorality with Indian women, practised openly by many of the planters. But in the labor itself there has been all the while a certain flaw which this exodus has disclosed. For, though the tea-garden managers are allowed to send down to the plains and bring these ignorant men and women many hundreds of miles from their homes, there is no regulation whatever which obliges these same managers either to pay a living wage in times of trade depression or else to repatriate the laborers whom they have imported. The consequence has been that, in this special instance, when life on certain estates became unbearable owing to shortage of wages, the men and women, hearing that Mahatma Gandhi would give them relief, started to walk back to their homes, with all the inevitable suffering that this involved. In their exodus, they were obliged to take a river journey from Chandpur to Goalundo. They became congested on the river bank, in many thousands, at Chandpur; and the Bengal Government, influenced by the tea-planters, stubbornly refused to help them forward on the river journey. Therefore they perished miserably in large numbers by cholera and pneumonia. To add to the horror of it all, some Gurkha soldiers were turned on to them at dead of night, at the beginning of the monsoon, to drive them out of the third-class passenger shed of the railway station, where they had taken refuge. They were driven on to an open football ground, with no shelter provided. The Gurkha soldiers behaved most brutally. I arrived the very next day and saw the wounds which they had made with the butts of their rifles on emaciated and sickly women and children. Sir Henry Wheeler arrived ten days after, and saw with his own eyes sixteen wounded persons, seven of whom were women and two were children. He gave details in his report about these women's and children's wounds, and then stated, "*the force used, in the circumstances, was not excessive.*" These words, which I have italicized, display, I am afraid, a mentality which is much too common in India to-day. I would hasten to add, as I stated in my public speech at the time, that in earlier days the Indian Civil Service was rightly noted for the humanity shown during cholera epidemics. But to turn Gurkhas on to miserable, emaciated, cholera-stricken people (a large proportion of whom were women and children), and to drive them from their only shelter out on to a shelterless football field in the middle of the night, with heavy rains impending, was not in accordance with the high traditions of the Indian Civil Service.

The failure of the Reform Councils to represent the public interest was shown by the fact that, although the action of the Bengal Government at Chandpur was condemned by every section of the Indian community, the Government was able to get off without a vote of censure. The whole matter has been hushed up. Even the serious flaw in the labor regulations, which has been disclosed by the exodus, has received no attention in the Councils. From the public point of view they have been practically useless.—Yours, &c.,

Shantiniketan.

C. F. ANDREWS.

## Letters to the Editor.

### THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE.

SIR,—President Harding's proposal for a Conference at Washington and the meeting of the Commission for the reduction of armaments under the League of Nations are helping to draw people's attention specifically to the question as to whether, in spite of the war against militarism, the nations are not going to drift back again to competitive expenditure on armies, navies, and munitions of war, ostensibly, of course, for defensive purposes, but actually for the maintenance of supremacy.

The articles of the Covenant of the League of Nations dealing with this question were among the most unsatisfactory of the many unsatisfactory provisions in that instrument. There is no subject about which greater insincerity abounds. Pious opinions with regard to reduction are very easily expressed, and can be safely applauded. But neither those who formulate the opinions nor those who welcome them have the very remotest conception as to how they are to be carried out, or whether, indeed, they are capable of being carried out at all. The Covenant, bound as it was to the Treaty of Versailles, thereby tacitly accepted the policy of drastic *unilateral* reductions amounting practically to disarmament. This, so far from being a step in the direction of general reduction, has a precisely contrary effect.

It is the purest hypocrisy to talk of "mutual agreements" between members of the League of Nations; it is idle to enumerate headings under which reductions may be made; it is useless to talk of standards, ratios, numbers, or sums of money. There is no plan, scheme, device, or arrangement which can stand for a single moment if international fear and suspicion continue to exist. To take a rifle out of a man's hand is pure waste of time. He will either get another or fetch a machine-gun. What you have to do is to get rid of the motive which makes him want to use the rifle; and until you do this all your talk of scales of reduction and limitation is so much waste of breath. But this is the very point which the statesmen who rule the world to-day refuse to face. This is the point the League of Nations avoids.

If an example of the inadequate and futile manner in which this question is considered is wanted, it will be found in the "Final Report of the Committee on Limitation of Armaments," issued by the League of Nations Union. Here we find "the limitation imposed upon Germany" suggested as the model, and we find basic minimums, estimated requirements, questionnaires, exchange of information, agreement as to details, &c., advocated and recommended; but no word of warning that all these expedients are bound to fail so long as international jealousy, suspicion, or desire for revenge is fostered, and so long as the motive for hostile action is kept alive.

If this method of approach to the great problem of armaments is the wrong one, what is the right one? There was a provision in the Covenant against Secret Treaties. This has been already disregarded. There was a phrase, "open covenants openly arrived at," which has remained a catch phrase. Parliament is less consulted than ever on foreign affairs, and only a very inconsiderable portion of its time is ever occupied with the discussion of the many vital problems with which we are immediately concerned in all parts of the world. Foreign policy is conducted behind the closed doors of the Foreign Office, with a further subterranean communication from 10, Downing Street, which adds considerably to the atmosphere of intrigue and confusion. In fact, the conduct of our foreign relations since the war is more dangerously undemocratic than it even was before the war.

Until you get rid, once and for all, of secret diplomacy, until you secure Parliamentary and popular control of policy, until you have a Foreign Secretary who openly confides in the people and a Prime Minister who acts with him and not behind him, and until you expunge the vindictive clauses from the Peace Treaties, you may wake up any morning to find the country involved in serious complications, you may discover that we are becoming the target for acute international animosity, and you will regard the talk about reduced armaments as dangerous nonsense. On the other hand, once you get international solidarity between the peoples who are fully cognizant of their commitments, and only desire co-operation and amity; once you eliminate the spirit of revenge from European policy; once you get rid of your uncontrolled statesmen weaving their plots behind closed doors and keeping the people outside in total ignorance; and once a real League of all nations is established, a very different atmosphere will be created, and armaments will be reduced by the peoples themselves, for the simple reason that they will not need them.—Yours, &c.,

ARTHUR PONSONBY.

SIR,—Everyone knowing China will agree with your approval of the suggestion that at the Washington Conference it should be proposed that the whole future international

structure of the Far East should be based on a series of identical treaties concluded between China and the other Far Eastern Powers, and that these should replace the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and all similar pacts concluded without Chinese participation.

It is, of course, not officially admitted that this is the idea of the American Government, but frankly it is the only possible one which ought to be adopted. If the Powers go to Washington to settle the future of the Far East without acceptance of the Chinese standpoint, their work is doomed to failure. Unfortunately, there are some of the older diplomatic school who still cling to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance like a fetish. Japan has given way over Shantung, to her credit. Perhaps now we may learn her real views on the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. As it is, we seem to cling to it for fear of offending Japan, and Japan clings to it for fear of offending us. Yet we both of us recognize its futility. Enough is known to show that if America expresses her views freely and candidly on this and other kindred matters, the other Powers will accept them, and they will do so because the American view on Chinese matters is substantially that of China herself.—Yours, &c.,

CHARLES WATNEY,  
London Correspondent,  
"The North China Daily Herald."

#### BRITISH LIBERALISM AND FRANCE.

SIR,—In Professor Zimmern's surprising letter he overlooks one count of the indictment against Paris, the Disturber of Europe, and that count, I think, the strongest.

Whether French support is actually behind Mr. Friedrich and his bandits in the Burgenland or not (I have lately been in that neighborhood also, and have my own opinion about it), it is impossible to deny that French example inclined them, as it inclines all troubling elements in Central Europe and elsewhere, to warlike action, to reliance upon force.

Opposing the view that generosity and reason would bring back real peace more quickly than vindictive and irrational hate, Paris has everywhere encouraged violence and delayed the return to sanity. Thus the Czecho-Slovak Government, which Professor Zimmern cites as an upholder of true democracy under French instruction, makes militarism rather than open friendliness the keystone of its policy. Did Professor Zimmern go to Prague? The place is packed with soldiers. Prussianism is rampant, as anyone can see by attending the ceremony of changing guard on the Hradshin, with its trumpery imitation of an Old World Potsdam parade.

President Masaryk and Mr. Benes may be, as Professor Zimmern claims, "working hard for the reconciliation of racial hatreds and the recuperation of European prosperity," but their methods on the Danube (to take one instance) scarcely suggest this. Here they pursue what seems to be a blindly and bitterly "national" advantage with intent to deprive Vienna of its river trade and to secure predominance over the whole of this trade by making Pressburg (which they have disguised as Bratislava) the principal harbor in this region, and inducing the Danube Commission to reside there.

As for Jugo-Slavian democracy, the Belgrade Government appear to have followed French example certainly, but in the direction of trampling with fierce energy upon all who lift voices against any of its acts!

Paris is, as all who have travelled with unprejudiced eyes admit, "the most formidable reactionary force in Europe." Not France: there is a very large body of opinion in France which condemns Paris: that has just been shown by the election of Marty, the mutineer, to the Paris Conseil Municipal. If Professor Zimmern means by "French Liberals" those who dislike the plan which M. Clemenceau is demanding in its entirety, of "forcing Germany to her knees," then he truly told them to seek British sympathy among those who are looking forward rather than among those who are looking back. But they would hardly need to be told this.

They see, as we see, how fatal it must be for France to create hatred and a longing for revenge in German hearts. To "keep Germany down" is the dream of a madman; it

is a desire possible only to politicians totally ignorant of economics and the bases of national welfare. Force (which in France is spelt Foch) can never serve a declining population of forty millions against a growing population of sixty. The truest friends of the French people will continue to put these considerations before them, instead of excusing the crazy machinations of reactionary intrigue.—Yours, &c.,

HAMILTON FYFE.

Offices of "Looking Forward,"  
Bream's Buildings, E.C. 4.

#### "THE FOG OF HISTORY."

SIR,—An article by L. W. under the above title appeared in your issue of August 27th. It was a review of a volume of essays edited by me under the title of "The Evolution of World Peace," and the evident fact that the reviewer did not realize the purpose and origin of the book, and its place in a large series, leads me to send you a few words of explanation and comment. In the first year of the war, prompted by a gathering of the London Adult School Union, I undertook to organize a series of Summer Schools to study the forces and tendencies in history which have made for the greater unity of mankind.

In a time of the greatest stress and division known, at any rate in recent days, it seemed opportune to call public attention to the counteracting forces, and the attempt has certainly been successful beyond the early anticipations of the promoters. The series of "Unity Schools" and the subsequent "Unity Series," published by the Oxford Press, have gone on ever since, and the first volume, called "The Unity of Western Civilization," has been followed by "Progress and History," and "Recent Developments in European Thought." The volume reviewed by L. W. is the last in the series, though another on "Western Races and the World" is shortly to appear.

It is surely essential to realize the continuity and general purpose of this effort if we are to judge fairly any particular member of the series. Given the fact that there has been, viewing history as a whole, such a tendency towards greater unity in the world, it must be thought a desirable object to make this clearer to the public, and by dwelling on it—without, of course, ignoring the obvious drawbacks—to strengthen our hope and our determination to make it prevail.

This was, and is, our general scope, but there is no sign that L. W. realized it in writing his review. I cannot but think that he, or any other man of goodwill—certainly all the readers and writers of THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM—would wish well to such an undertaking. The only valid line of attack would be that the work was badly done, the facts perverted, or important considerations left untouched. It may be that L. W. would thus justify his estimate, and when he tells us that "the title of the volume would have been equally apposite had it been 'The Evolution of World War' " (!), the prospective reader may well feel himself excused the trouble of pursuing the argument.

To such a one, and to L. W. himself, I would point out that the two essays in which most progress is described—that on the Nineteenth Century and on the League of Nations—are not mentioned by him at all. (Does he seriously question the fact that the world has become incomparably more united as one whole in the last hundred years?) And the two essays—those by Mr. Wells and Miss Power—which he selects as "the only chapters which come to any kind of grip with their subject," interesting and useful as they are, are the only two which do not deal directly with the original subject, viz., the historical process leading to greater unity in the world.

L. W. deplores as I do the "grotesque magnifying of the unimportant" in our traditional teaching and view of history. I appeal to him for more sympathy and support in a sincere, if imperfect, attempt to correct this perversion on one of its most important sides.—Yours, &c.,

F. S. MARVIN.

#### GILBERTIAN FINANCE.

SIR,—It is utterly impossible for the industry and commerce of Britain to survive unless it is immediately relieved of the taxation which is sucking its life-blood. Here, in a few simple figures, which can be

applied to practically any business, the financial aspect is clearly shown.

The boom year of 1919 has been followed by two years of unparalleled slump. Assume that an established business was making, prior to the last three years, an average profit of £5,000 per annum, and that in the boom year it made £15,000, and in the slump years of 1920 and 1921 it lost £5,000 each year. What income tax would it be called upon to pay during these three years? The following are the correct figures:—

	Profit. £	Loss £	Income Tax & Super Tax. £ s. d.
1919 ...	15,000	...	3,451 18 0
1920 ...	...	5,000	1,768 15 0
1921 ...	...	5,000	416 5 0
		Total	£5,636 18 0

To simplify this statement I have ignored the £4,300 Excess Profits Duty which would have to be paid in 1919, as this amount would be reclaimed later. Therefore, although a net profit of £5,000 has nominally been made on three years' trading, the income tax demanded amounts to £5,636 18s. It is Gilbertian finance! Not only are the entire profits annexed by the Inland Revenue, but £636 18s. in addition is "asked for." I deliberately say "asked for," as I fail to see how it can ever be collected. Here is an actual case, which can be duplicated by the thousand, of 22s. 9d. in the £1 income tax. It is not merely a paradox, it is a calamitous absurdity. Taxation must be abated, or within a short time we shall witness a financial crash, the consequences of which will be catastrophic.—Yours, &c.

H. DENNIS BRADLEY.

#### THE REWARD OF CAPITAL.

SIR,—I have read with interest the articles by Mr. Ramsay Muir, and should like to make a few observations upon No. 2, in your issue of September 17th.

Mr. Muir expresses very strong ideas as to the moral right of a person to retain the profits of his investments. One would like to know exactly how he arrives at his views of morality. In the whole of his article he deals with profits; not one word about losses. Surely if the investor has to bear the losses, he is morally entitled to the profits when he gets them. Mr. Muir is anxious that the State should interfere in the business of all limited liability companies to enforce the creation of reserve funds. He apparently thinks the State will understand the affairs of these companies better than the shareholders and directors. He has evidently a great admiration for the State, which, however, some of us do not share. Mr. Muir thinks that the holder of shares is not entitled to unlimited profits "when he enjoys the security of a well-established concern." He also speaks repeatedly of "a perfectly safe company." One would be interested to see a list of such companies. I am not acquainted with any such company. He also thinks that "limited liability companies have seldom or never" spent surplus profits intelligently. I venture to suggest that his knowledge of limited companies is limited.

Mr. Ramsay Muir, like many other enthusiastic young men, wishes to make the world better. So did Rob Roy when he adopted

"the good old rule  
the simple plan,  
That they should take who have the power,  
And they should keep who can."

He has a scheme for taking from other people their property.

At the present time an enormous number of our work-people are suffering from unemployment, which is the result of the Government application of the principles of Rob Roy. The only way in which it is possible for the unemployed to get employment is through the openings offered them by enterprising capitalists, but a perusal of Mr. Ramsay Muir's articles would not encourage any capitalist to take up any enterprise in this country; it would have the reverse effect.

If Mr. Ramsay Muir is acquainted with any trade or business which is perfectly safe, and would like to find employment for any of the unemployed, he has only got to take his figures to some rich banker and demonstrate to him the "perfect safety" and profitableness of the enterprise. He will have no difficulty in getting the necessary capital. The profits, after paying interest and redemption on the capital, he can give to the employees or to the State as he thinks best.—Yours, &c.,

ARNOLD LUPTON.

7, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.

THE publishers of "A Young Girl's Diary," reviewed in last week's NATION AND ATHENÆUM, ask whether certain passages in the review are to be taken as a reflection on them. They certainly are not, and we do not think they can be so taken. Our strictures were obviously not for the publishers of a book recommended by Freud, but for the diary itself. We are informed that the sale of the book is rigidly restricted to members of the medical, legal, and educational professions, and that a note to this effect is affixed to the book.

#### Poetry.

##### "THE EARTH HATH BUBBLES."

COME they no more, those ecstasies of earth,  
To make men tales for winter's hearth?  
Hath the stern spirit wearied of his dreams,  
Sleeps he too deep for passion's gleams?  
Yet still the moon can move unfathomed tears,  
Even in the noonday field walk lonely fears.

The owl, the fox cry chilling in the night,  
A thousand voices turn cheeks white;  
Long sighings run abroad when winds all sleep,  
Bodies through bursting hedges leap:  
And if we chance awhile to lose our hold  
On certainty, the morning finds us bold.

Who saw the sphinx? 'Twas you! Along the street  
You heard the beat of padded feet,  
You ran with curdled blood, but past it sped,  
Leapt the high wall, showed its man's head!  
Four-footed, lowering at the moon in wane,—  
That now you call a sickness of your brain!

We've lain abed and felt the whole house quake  
To a blow, dogs barked not: who should break  
The gotch on its nail, the vase on the sill? Or why  
Should all tradition seem to lie?  
Or by what frenzy of their fiend prince were  
The earth's hobgoblins banished their old sphere?

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

##### ENGLISH TO IRISH YOUTH.

LET it be mine alone—this cheek in flame  
To burn the mist about me till I see!  
I care not if I find in you no shame:  
Your eyes have fire enough!—so let it be!  
Haggard you are before your broken hearth,  
And yet with lips refreshed and newly kissed—  
Mine know the bitter waters of the earth,  
And I am weary with a world of mist.  
My gilded coat is sodden. For your part  
Give pity while your own has rosy gleams.  
I wear an ancient country in my heart,  
But I am tired and cannot tell my dreams.  
And yet your singing wings and silver tears  
Were surely mine too in the elder years!

F. M.



## The Week in the City.

(BY OUR CITY EDITOR.)

### THURSDAY.

THE revenue and expenditure returns for the first half of the financial year 1921-22, although they are not perhaps quite so bad as might have been expected, support in convincing fashion the Prime Minister's remarks about limiting the burden to be placed upon the taxpayer in respect of unemployment relief. In the period April 1st to September 30th there was a revenue deficit of £42 millions. The vision of a surplus to go towards debt reduction has faded away already, and hopes of relief of taxation in the near future can, as things are at present, hardly be entertained outside Bedlam. If huge additional sums for relief of unemployment are to be added to the bill, then the certainty of increasing taxation is sealed. Additions to the inordinately burdensome level of imposts in force to-day mean the effective shackling of industrial and trade recovery. The only way to solve the unemployment problem is to get trade moving again. The tragedy of immediate artificial relief, necessary though it is, is that it tends to block the way to true economic remedy. City experts are not optimistic as to the speed with which real trade recovery—the only natural cure for unemployment—can proceed, in view of the financial chaos left by the war and the three years of tragic disappointment that have followed. To return to the revenue figures, there are in them features for which one may be thankful. Some branches of revenue have kept up much better than seemed likely. Ways and Means Advances—the potent instrument of inflation—have risen by only £6 millions in the half-year. That the increase was not far greater is due to the largely increased subscriptions to Treasury Bonds in the last few weeks of the half-year.

### TREASURY BONDS AND NEW ISSUES.

The first series of 5½ per cent. Treasury Bonds brought in a total of over £50 millions. They were withdrawn last Saturday, and this week a second series has been launched on terms very similar, the only important change being that the issue price is 98 instead of 97. Dealings in the first series Bonds were started in the Stock Exchange on Monday, when the quotation ranged within a fraction of the issue price. But they are already travelling towards 98, the price of issue of the second series. The New Capital market, after a decidedly slack September quarter, is again displaying a certain liveliness. The Ceylon Government Loan of £3,000,000 6 per cent. Stock at 97 was oversubscribed in a few hours, thus rivalling the success of the South African Loan last week. There are a few prominent industrial issues about this week. In view of the beginning of the autumn crop of industrial prospectuses, may I once more impress upon small investors that they should concentrate upon sound security and never succumb to the allurements of any prospectus until at least two questions have been satisfactorily answered:—(1) Does this issue present more risks than I can afford to run? (2) Can I not obtain an equally good or better investment among securities already quoted on the Stock Exchange and whose history is known to me?

### MARKET TENDENCIES.

Press exigencies compel me to write earlier than usual this week, and before the Bank Rate decision is made. I do not anticipate a change in the rate this week, though there seems to be no convincing reason why it should not take place soon. There is little new to say of the stock markets. As a whole they are patchy and unsatisfactory. In recent months one market or another has shown a short burst of activity. But these fitful flickers may be likened to the occasional puffs of breeze on a calm lake, which the fly-fisherman knows do not redeem the day from being a bad one. Of the stock market outlook in the comparatively near future it is almost impossible to make any prediction. No immediate relief from present quietness appears to be in

sight. Any measures which the Government can devise to rouse trade activity should be reflected in Throgmorton Street improvement. But hopes on this score are not too bright. To look in another direction, it would seem that the Government will be driven to inflationary methods. This, in turn, might help markets, but how much is doubtful. For the small investor, at any rate, lapses from the path of sound investment and excursions into the alluring meadows of speculation should be severely eschewed.

### WRITING UP—AND DOWN.

Rumor credits the Dunlop directors with the intention of financial reorganization and writing down their capital in view of the depreciation of certain assets. The market, by putting the shares down to about 7s. 6d., has anticipated some such move. How short the time seems since the company was inflating its capital by means of a big bonus issue! How many of the companies which in the boom period followed the infectious share-bonus fashion will shortly be compelled to retrace their steps? I am not aiming special criticism at the Dunlop Company—the severity of the rubber crisis was foreseen by few indeed—or any other in particular. But the position in which many industrial companies now find themselves is a trenchant commentary on the short-sightedness of countless directors. Company finance during the past few years provides innumerable instances of departure from the canons of conservative discretion. I have quoted before instances of directors on the very eve of the great trade depression declaring the outlook to be rosy for years ahead, and justifying by their forecast some scheme of capital inflation. For the blind optimism of those days they and the many who looked to them for guidance must now be paying in anxiety—full measure running over.

### THE PROFITS OF INDUSTRY.

Sir Josiah Stamp, I see, has been delivering a strong criticism of the modern company balance-sheet, and accusing accountants of the "dog-in-the-manger" position of being the only people who possess the facts as to the real profits of industry for the past half-century, and never letting the public share their knowledge. To blame the accountants is hardly fair, but Sir Josiah undoubtedly makes a good point when he argues that a great service to the community would be performed if the valuable data in the hands of accountants were collated and made available for the study of economists. The relative shares of capital and labor in the fruits of industry are the subject of such burning social controversy that it may be hoped that Sir Josiah's suggestion will be carried further. Sir Josiah expressed the opinion that a small band of accountants could in ten years "put the economics of industry on the basis of an exact science." That, perhaps, is claiming too much; but the results of such work would undoubtedly be of immense national value.

### RUBBER TOPICS.

The report of the Rubber Plantations Investment Trust is rather better than was expected, but since the issue of the report the shares have been marked down to 11s. 9d. on the idea that the company would require more capital. The chairman's speech at the meeting on Monday will be watched with interest for this reason. The new Rubber Shareholders' Association held a well-attended meeting on Monday. The Association has made a fairly promising start, and is very much in earnest in its endeavors to help the rubber industry to weather the present crisis. How far it can succeed, where the Rubber Growers' Association has failed, remains to be seen. On the whole, my advice to rubber shareholders is to join the Association (the subscription is 10s. 6d.)—but not to hope for any miraculous result of its efforts.

L. J. R.



# THE ATHENÆUM



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## The World of Books.

HE is a young artist, and he stood with me at a window to get a better light, because he was inspecting, with a fixity of interest which was a little dubious, a pack of picture postcards that had been sent to him from Germany. They were photographs of scenes at Bullecourt, and on the ridges of Flanders, and about the Menin Road. To most of us they would have seemed indifferent pictures of dull subjects. But not to this man. He appeared to imagine he was lucky to have them, and I should say that any art exhibition would have to be very original and stimulating to attract him half as much as that soiled pack of cards. He has reason, of course, to remember the ridges of Flanders, and I fear he finds something he likes about me only because I do not change the subject when he talks of the Menin Road.

IN the street below a crowd of disfavored outcasts, shabby and dispirited men, marched along under banners bearing some comic echoes of our fine words out of 1915. Some of those unemployed fellows had war decorations. They were accompanied by a telling demonstration by the State of its police force, and some of the police, too, had war decorations. That street scene was dim and insignificant to me. One gets used to it. It is part of our landscape. Now, what were the suppressed emotions which suddenly rushed past his guard I dare not attempt to bring into the daylight; but my young friend looked up from a choice landscape called *Toter Mann mit Stellung*, eyed the tableau beneath the window with apparent detachment, and then startled me with an outburst of incoherent violence concerning himself and other fools which I think would have had the usual strange import for a psycho-analyst. Then, without another glance, he stuffed the postcards into a pocket, smiled in flushed embarrassment—he himself was evidently surprised that this had happened to him—and took his departure awkwardly.

I HAD always thought he was a simple soul, easy to understand; but if all the quiet and modest fellows who appear to us to have agreed to forget their tragic years are like him, then we can make up our minds that our old institutions are fooling us with merely the illusion of permanence. There must be a pent and fathomless force in our midst, hidden and uncharted, with a potency and

possibilities not to be diagnosed from any of our records, which in the future will work on art, literature, religion, and politics, past all prophecy. Before the occasional signs which betray its existence the critics can only be dumb. We may only indicate, now and then, that there undoubtedly it is. These youngsters had accepted society more or less as they found it, and were even in the act of continuing it along its traditional lines when they were called from their work. Then, suddenly and drastically, they got a revelation of the basic character of that society which it took a life-time for a superlative genius and critic like Swift to discover. We have been thinking these young men were silent because they had nothing to say. They have something to say, but it transcends their powers. They dare not trust it to the common vehicles of expression.

\* \* \*

It is usual to suppose that the generation which experienced the war where it was really dangerous have nothing but that fascinating display to tell us about. I suspect they have much more. The Somme was only the mind of society made actual; no horror there but was the terrible disclosure of what was hidden beneath all that young men had been taught to respect in us. It is not surprising, therefore, that till now they have not been able to co-ordinate their impressions into anything coherent. A look, a gesture, a sardonic aside, no more, are all that check our still courageous platitudes about society. Occasionally there is a disclosure of what they may be hiding from us, and two documents have been published recently which should help to a guess at what the impact of the war may have caused to impressionable and generous minds. What was the nature of that war? The "Fighting at Jutland," which is a large volume of the personal experiences of officers and men (Macmillan, 21s.), first privately circulated, and now published for the first time (though in an abridged form), held me in a way that the "Tales of Mystery and Imagination" never could. Nearly all these narratives, of men who were with Beatty's battle-cruisers, with Hood's Squadron, with the battle-squadrons, and with the destroyers, are quite artless. Here and there a narrator is self-conscious, and feels that some justice is due to the occasion, but generally it is the reader who, following the sequence of happenings to one of these terrible war machines, feels impelled to cry out. The man who tells the story hardly ever does that. His voice is the one usual to the survivor of a disaster, or to a principal in a tragedy, tired, unemphasized, and monotonous. This book is a most valuable addition to what little literature of the war we have. Another book, an American novel, by John dos Passos, called "Three Soldiers" (Doran), should not be missed, even by enthusiastic readers of novels. It is almost a literal transcript of that irrational world a soldier entered when he joined up. It is done as a new school of American realists are doing much of the more interesting American fiction. Whether that is good art is for the critics to decide, but, as the saying goes, Mr. dos Passos gets his three soldiers "across."

H. M. T.

## Short Studies.

### ATOMS AND MEN.

WE know a good deal about this and that and the other thing. We have invented all kinds of contraptions. Our knowledge is growing every day. Scientists are finding out all kinds of weird and wonderful things. Now they are out on the track of the atom. The atom has been doing business, in his own particular way, for many, many moons. He was at his job for many, many moons even before we appeared on deck to decorate the earth-scene. But now we, the chief cooks and bottle-washers generally of the earth, are on his track. The men of science are out to make the atom work harder than he has been in the habit of working. Liberating his energy they call it.

That the atom is an intelligent being is obvious. Indeed, according to some he is a kind of universe running on invisible lines. But now the atom is coming very much to the fore. He is making his *début* in the lime-light. And here it is just as well to point out that he is not doing this on his own initiative. He has never expressed any desire for the lime-light. He has been going along quietly working, saying nothing to no one. He has been modesty itself.

However, Sir Oliver Lodge, and other gentlemen, have got on his track. They have run him to his lair. And now it seems that they are really going to set him to work. Not twice or three times as much as he has been working. Nor yet twenty or thirty times as much. But a million times as much!

It is something awful. This stupendous exploiting of the atom is dreadful. To be forced to work a million times more than he has been working! What would any of us do if the base capitalist tried to work a game like this upon us? What would Ben Tillet say? What would J. H. Thomas say? Or Bob Smillie? Think of the plumber. Think of his being asked to liberate the energy that reposes within him a million times more swiftly than he is in the habit of liberating it.

It must be remarked, however, that our scientific gentlemen have not yet quite found out the way to make the atom do this marvel of extra work. There seems to be some slight difficulty as to the harness. At the present moment—as near as I can gather—they are in conference with the harness-makers. For the kind of harness that will make the atom do his extra bit of toil must be of a very special kind of make. This is plain even to the man in the street. It must be a certain kind of harness. Naturally.

However, Sir Oliver is on the job along with his large-browed associates. They have their several eyes glued on to the unfortunate atom. Practically speaking, they are up to all his ways. The real difficulty that has now to be surmounted is the getting of the right kind of harness. But that is only a question of time.

That the atom is endowed with intelligence is admitted by these scientific gentlemen. Indeed, they go so far as to say that its intelligence is akin to our own intelligence. If this be the case, how are these gentlemen to know but what the atom may have a word or so to say when the day arrives, and he is ordered to do a million times more work than he has been in the habit of doing? Suppose the atom sits up and takes a bit of notice! Suppose he takes a leaf out of our book, concerning hard work! What then?

Yes, what then?

Listen, my good Sir Oliver! Listen, my good gentlemen with the high foreheads! You are not playing with fire. You are playing with something that is behind even fire. You are playing with things that you no more really understand than does the common or garden intellectual giant of the street. You are not letting well enough alone. Our dear, good old friend, Man, has far too much power to play with already. He knows more than is good for him.

Yes, he knows more than is good for him in the sense of being able to manipulate and control power. If you scientific Johnnies are not careful, you will destroy

the earth and the things thereon. Some bulgy-browed idiot will be finding, say, some method of burning up all the oxygen that is on the earth. This liberation of the energy of the atom, if it can be liberated (which I hope not), may turn out to be as intelligent as giving a child matches and gunpowder to play with.

To tell you the truth, I'm afraid of you gentlemen. Anarchists and Bolshies and—and the other persons who are trying to make the earth more interesting than God made it, are as mild as new milk when compared with you. They are at least a million times less dangerous.

If you want to benefit man, try and get him to act fairly towards his fellow. Try and invent some formula of brotherhood that will appeal to him. This business of interfering with powers that work in accordance with mysterious laws, that you in reality understand no better than anyone else, is wrong.

And—well, supposing you do understand them. Supposing you do. Do you not know that there are men on earth to-day who would destroy the very earth itself, if they had the power?

If you want to do good, turn your attention to the eliminating of the ape and the tiger from the nature of man. Turn your attention to persuading him to do unto others as he would that others should do unto him. Try and get him to follow the precepts of One who was immeasurably wiser and greater and nobler than you are.

Let the atom alone. It isn't doing anything to you, and if you bother it too much it may turn on you.

BART KENNEDY.

## Reviews.

### LONDON AND THE GROSVENORS.

Mary Davies and the Manor of Ebury. By CHARLES T. GATTY. Two vols. (Cassell. £3 3s. net.)

To the student of London topography these handsome volumes are a pure joy; for the lover of romance they provide many strange and moving incidents, and to the London land reformer they convey a valuable lesson. They enable us to answer the question how it comes about that the great ground landlords of London are able to exercise those powers of extraction and absorption which have had so great an influence on the life and labor of the capital. When Mr. Lloyd George in his urban land campaign reached the Grosvenor estates he detailed the case of Mr. Gorrington, who had built up by his talent and his capital a great drapery business in Buckingham Palace Road, in premises for which he paid the Duke of Westminster a ground rent of £350 per annum. In 1903 the lease expired, and Mr. Lloyd George told us that the terms which the tenant had to accept were the following: (1) a new ground rent of £4,000 per annum for the site of the old premises; (2) a separate ground rent of £1,200 per annum for the site of four adjoining buildings; (3) a cash fine of £50,000 paid to the Duke; (4) an undertaking to remodel part of the premises at a further cost of £50,000. That, in the briefest possible language, is a complete illustration of the manner in which the ground landlords of London have dealt with the men who have built up business undertakings on their estates, while the law has exempted them from any contribution to the burdens of urban life. For example, that well-known jurist, Sir John Macdonell, in his work on the land question, draws special attention to the instances of favoritism towards landlords which stud the local Acts relating to the paving and lighting of the London squares passed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He writes: "Looking, for instance, into 7th George IV. c. 58, relating to Grosvenor Place and other lanes and streets adjoining, I find among its 140 clauses one giving powers to Commissioners to compel owners and builders of houses, where there ought to be streets, to pave, level, or gravel them. But the Act specially exempted Robert, Earl Grosvenor, from paying for the improvement of his own property. It also empowered him to put whatever fences



or gates he was pleased to erect on streets which others maintained." We ask ourselves who gave this dominion over the lives, businesses, and pockets of Londoners in the twentieth century to the Grosvenor family, and we come back to a corrupt courtier, a griping miser, and a half-witted heiress. Fortunately there can be no doubt of the facts, for Mr. C. T. Gatty has had access to the unsorted papers and documents at Eaton Hall, and he presents them without the shadow of a suspicion crossing his mind that the Grosvenors have been other than benefactors to their fellow-countrymen.

It is a fascinating picture which he paints for us of "the West End," as we call it, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As usual, the Church had secured a fine estate at the very gates of London, and, as usual, the courtiers, at the dissolution of the monasteries, swallowed it. The interests of the people who lived there or those who were to come were never thought of. For instance, one of the first disputes in which the ground in question was involved, before the Grosvenors obtained it, related to the "Lammas rights" claimed by the parishioners of St. Margaret's, Westminster, and St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. The farmers who rented the ground from the favorites of Elizabeth set up fences and enclosed the ground, whereupon on Lammas Day, 1592, the aggrieved parishioners arrived with pickaxes and other tools, pulled down the fences, and broke the gates. But the growth of London was on the side of the enclosers, and although both sides petitioned Lord Burleigh, the farmers prevailed. The Manor of Eia, from which all this contention arose, comprised about 1,000 acres of land which belonged to the Abbey of Westminster until it was seized by Henry VIII. It stretched from what is now the Bayswater Road to the Thames, and its eastern and western boundaries were respectively the Tyborne and the Westborne, two famous London streams which are now sewers. We may divide this 1,000 acres into four parts. Its north-western corner is now part of Hyde Park, and has nothing to do with the Grosvenors. On its east side there was the bailiwick of St. James, which is now represented by Berkeley Square and Mayfair, and is divided between Lord Berkeley, Lord Howe, and Sir Richard Sutton—mainly as the result of prodigal grants made to courtiers at the Restoration. In the southern area there is an enclave called the Manor of La Neyte, which represents the old grange and court-house of the Manor when the abbots of Westminster resided there. Its locality is marked by the Monster Tavern in St. George's Row, which was the terminus of the old Pimlico horsed omnibuses familiar to Londoners a generation ago. This estate is owned by the Sloane Stanleys and the Wallers.

With these three exceptions the Grosvenors own the whole of the great tract we have mentioned. It consists of two portions. The larger, which is south of Piccadilly, has for its eastern boundary the Tyborne brook, which crosses Piccadilly below White Horse Street, where there was once a stone bridge. Col. Robert Edis, architect of the Junior Constitutional Club, Mr. Gatty tells us, saw the culvert encased in concrete through which the stream now passes under that building. Then through the Green Park and under the grounds of Buckingham Palace, it passes the back of St. George's workhouse, the west side of the Stag Brewery, and so by Vauxhall Bridge Road and Tachbrook Street it reaches the L.C.C. pumping station in Grosvenor Road. The southern boundary of the Grosvenor estate is the river bank, and just east of the grounds of Chelsea Hospital, near the suspension bridge, we reach its western boundary, where the Westborne stream, also a sewer, enters the Thames. Its course takes us up Chelsea Bridge Road, under the Barracks, up Holbein Place, and through Sloane Square railway station, where the culvert carrying the stream may be seen between the rails and the roof. Crossing Pont Street and Lowndes Street, the Westborne goes through Lowndes Square and so by the Albert Gate into Hyde Park, where it leaves the Grosvenor estate and is known as the Serpentine. The northern and smaller portion of the Manor of Ebury is contained between Park Lane and Davies Street, with Oxford Street on the north and the Mayfair estates on the south. The area thus indicated was in 1614 arable or pastoral in the north, while the southern half consisted of a huge marsh which floods converted into a swamp, cut up

by ditches, involving constant disputes as to the liability for cleaning and maintenance. It is a pleasant picture which Mr. Gatty draws of the two streams winding between banks fringed with rushes and redolent with wild mint. The very names bring the scent of the hay over the foot-lights of history. For example, just behind Sloane Square station there was a four-acre field called the Little Rumbelow, while Upper Grosvenor Street is built on the site of "Mr. Greene's hay hills," as shown on the plan of 1614. There is a tradition that Queen Anne once came up the Tyborne stream in her barge as far as Bruton Street, and it is true that in Brook Mews, below Claridge's Hotel, during building excavations a pier wall was laid bare with iron rings for mooring boats.

The lease of this slice of Eden was granted in turn to various Tudor favorites, and at last James I. sold it to Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, an able but unscrupulous courtier, who in 1624 was impeached for gross corruption in his office of Lord Treasurer and deprived of his office, fined £50,000, and imprisoned in the Tower. Two years later the Earl sold the Manor of Ebury for £9,400. The buyer was a singular character; Hugh Awdeley, whose name is perpetuated in "South Audley Street," impressed his day and generation as their most successful miser and usurer. He was the son of a mercer in Huggin Lane in the City, was called to the bar, and for many years held the post of Clerk of the Court of Wards and Liveries, which at that period exercised directly on behalf of the king the guardianship of rich minors and other cares of estates now devolving on our modern Court of Chancery. Mr. Gatty takes a friendly view of "the great Awdeley" as the real founder of the London fortunes of the Grosvenors, but he admits quite frankly that during his long tenure of that office Awdeley would have endless avenues of information enabling him to advance money on real estate to needy clients, and that no doubt there was considerable jobbery. As the Earl of Middlesex was for some time the Master, he is doubtless right. But he protests strongly against the description of Awdeley by Isaac D'Israeli and others as a "ruthless blood-sucker," all of which imputations rest, he says, upon a pamphlet published shortly after Awdeley's death entitled "The Way to be Rich According to the Practice of the Great Audley, Who begun with two hundred pound in the year 1605 and dyed worth four hundred thousand Pound, this instant November 1662." Awdeley died at the Rectory of St. Clement Danes in Milford Lane, Strand, and he left the Ebury property to Alexander Davies, a poor scrivener, the son of his niece. It is with regard to the crop of fictions that have grown up around Davies that Mr. Gatty's researches at Eaton Hall have been most convincing. It has been asserted by one London topographer after another that Alexander Davies was a dairyman, that he lived at Bourdon House in Davies Street, Berkeley Square, that his daughter Mary was a beautiful milkmaid with whom Sir Thomas Grosvenor fell in love. Mr. Gatty demolishes the whole of this picturesque story. Alexander Davies was never a dairyman, Bourdon House was not built until sixty years after his death, his daughter was neither beautiful nor a milkmaid. At the age of eight she was sold by her mother for £5,000 cash down to the son of Lord Berkeley of Stratton, who was ten. As Lord Berkeley's father was unable to fulfil the articles, the marriage fell through, and Mary Davies's widowed mother had to repay the £5,000. Finding Sir Thomas Grosvenor, a young Cheshire landowner, she induced him to marry the heiress of Ebury and to provide the £5,000 and interest. Mary Davies, at the age of twelve years and eight months, was married to Sir Thomas at St. Clement Danes, Strand, and the Ebury estate, then worth £1,300 a year, passed to the Grosvenors. That £5,000 odd was a good investment for them, but it has been an expensive one for Londoners in our day.

We have no space to trace the chequered career of this neurotic heiress after her husband's death in 1700. She changed her religion, and in Paris was entrapped into a pretended marriage which provided the law courts, civil and ecclesiastical, with profitable employment. Her mental faculties had always been ill-balanced, and she ended her days as a lunatic in charge of a curator. Her three sons succeeded in turns to their father's baronetcy, and in later years the family has advanced by stages to a dukedom.

So much for the Grosvenors. To Mr. Gatty we owe thanks for his patient working of this rich vein of historical ore in the tin boxes of Eaton Hall, though we think he might have been a little less superior about the blunders of his predecessors, who lacked his "inside" sources of information. He confesses that some of those who have examined his MSS. have told him that they are crowded with side-tracks, and that the by-ways are broader than the highways. We think this criticism is just. His book is the application to literature of the practice of "extra-illustration," which has given the name of Granger a certain fame. Mr. Gatty has "Grangerized" these volumes with chapters—like that of the heraldic litigation of Scrope v. Grosvenor—which have nothing to do with Mary Davies or Ebury Manor, and if they had been trimmed off, the book would have been the gainer. But he has presented us with a fascinating study of a famous quarter of a great city, and an instructive chapter in the history of a noble family. But if only Anatole France could have written it!

### WORDSWORTH AND MEREDITH.

**Three Studies in Shelley, and an Essay on Nature in Wordsworth and Meredith.** By Professor ARCHIBALD T. STRONG. (Milford. 10s. 6d. net.)

A FORTNIGHT ago, in reviewing Professor Herford's essays, we touched upon the fringe of the question whether poetry can be said to have a philosophy proper to itself. An equally interesting collection of essays by another professor brings us back to the question.

For my own part, I believe that these questions are more interesting than important. It is easy enough to become absorbed in trying to balance an egg on its end, or a walking-stick upon one's nose; and I fear that the interest aroused by these speculations is of the same irrelevant kind. They seem too often to ignore the essentials for the accidents of poetry. On the other hand, it must be admitted that it is legitimate and may be valuable to investigate the philosophies of poets who had philosophies, provided that we remember that such poets are comparatively few. The danger is not only that we may be induced to regard the poet with a philosophy as the typical poet, but also that we may over-emphasize the philosophical part even in him.

The real trouble is that philosophical poets lend themselves rather easily to academic disquisition. They seem to have been made on purpose for professorial handling. Far be it from us to pass a general slight on Professors of Literature—the distinguished teachers at Oxford and Cambridge stand far above our strictures—but we cannot help supposing that many of these excellent gentlemen are inevitably, perhaps unconsciously, attracted to a poet who can be discussed, with no manifest outrage, under the category of "concepts." "The Concept of Nature in Wordsworth," "The Concept of Time in Shelley"—there is nothing patently inappropriate in such titles. But substitute for the one name Chaucer, for the other Shakespeare, and they become immediately absurd. It is a homely but effective little test. When we find that such a substitution makes nonsense of the title of a nominal essay on poetry, we may pretty safely conclude that the divine nectar has been spilled through the writer's fingers.

The method of these inquiries is, with rare exceptions, the same. It consists in collecting the various assertions of the poet about the nature of the universe, and trying to make them systematic; and even though the expositor may be firmly resolved to remember that they are poetic assertions, he forgets that they are falsified by the very fact of systematic arrangement. It is, of course, possible that a poet may choose to speak as a philosopher, as Lucretius did; but then he is a philosopher and not a poet. But when Lucretius coined for the universe the astounding phrase "flammanitia mœnia mundi" (the flaming walls of the world), he was a poet and not a philosopher. To make this obvious point clear we may take Shelley's familiar lines:—

"Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,  
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,  
Until Death tramples it to fragments."

If you like to have it so, that is a philosophic judgment on the nature of the universe. But as such it is the merest common-

place of idealism. As the creative symbol of a deeply felt emotion it is something of a different kind altogether. To treat it as philosophy is like treating a coin of Hiero of Syracuse as an ancient and obsolete shilling. If you go on collecting pennies and shillings of philosophy from the poets, you may in time accumulate a pound; but the currency will always be antiquated and not worth even its face value. But the poetry you have ignored will be beyond price.

It is strange that to insist on this necessary distinction seems to many equivalent to renouncing all but the rigidly æsthetic judgment of literature. As if, in demanding that poetry should be conceived and appreciated solely by virtue of its power to communicate emotion, one surrendered the right to distinguish between the significance of one emotion and another! Or, again, as if it necessarily involved denying that a scheme of philosophic truth held by a poet could influence, or even determine, his poetic production! It has done so, seldom, indeed, but it has happened; and it may, at any time, happen again. But even here a sharp distinction ought to be drawn between a true philosopher-poet like Lucretius, that is, a man who is by turns philosopher and poet, and poets like Wordsworth and Shelley, who appear to enounce philosophical judgments when in reality they are doing nothing of the kind. Wordsworth and Shelley reached what conclusions they did reach by a poetic, not a dialectical, process. Wordsworth systematized not his thoughts, which were neither original nor profound, but his emotions, which were both. And to try to estimate an emotional attitude by its appeal or validity as a philosophy is like trying to measure the majesty of the ocean in terms of H<sub>2</sub>O and salt.

All this is, no doubt, a truism; yet the study of two estimable books of professorial essays leads us irresistibly to the conclusion that the truism has not yet penetrated the seclusion of Academe. There the old confusions seem to flourish in undisturbed luxuriance, and the weeds of hoary misunderstanding boldly raise their heads. For the danger of looking for philosophy in poetry is that one so easily comes to mistake the one for the other. It would not be so bad if the philosophy were good or exciting philosophy; but the philosophy of the poets is generally second-rate, just as the houses which painters put in their pictures are generally very poor houses to live in. If you insist on looking for houses in pictures, you will forget what a picture is.

And this, we believe, is the fate that has overtaken Professor Strong. By dint of looking for philosophy in poetry he has come to forget what poetry is. After giving us three comprehensive and very informative essays on "The Faith of Shelley," "The Symbolism of Shelley," and "The Sinister in Shelley," all excellent of their kind, he embarks on an investigation into "Nature in Wordsworth and Meredith." It is true that he comes to the conclusion that Meredith's conception of Nature is narrow and unsatisfying as compared to Wordsworth's (which is as it should be); but he is continually bracketing the two together as "these two great poets." To me, personally, the mere collocation of Wordsworth and Meredith as poets is a whole programme of dismay. But possibly there are still people who look upon Meredith as a great poet. Yet even they will surely feel something of a shock when they find Wordsworth's perfect poem, "Three years she grew in sun and shower," placed side by side with "Love in the Valley" as illustrating "a certain fundamental unity of delight and love and beautiful expression existing between these two poets." Professor Strong is bold enough to quote the Wordsworth:—

"The stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place  
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face."

That is the splendid and delicate simplicity of great poetry. "We pass naturally from this to 'Love in the Valley,'" says Professor Strong, and I wonder whether his idea of a natural transition is falling down a precipice. He quotes three stanzas, ending with—

"Maiden still the morn is: and strange she is, and secret;  
Strange her eyes: her cheeks are cold as cold sea-shells."

And with the enchantment of the Wordsworth still in his ears, he speaks of "these last two perfect lines." Perfect! Why, you can hardly even read them, so clumsy and harsh are

they. With them the Professor compares "these other not less exquisite" lines:—

"Lo, where the eyelashes of night are raised  
Yet lowly over morning's pure grey eyes."

"Eyelashes"—"eyes"; "Lo"—"lowly"! Meredith had the ear of an organ-grinder. And the vision, I am tempted to add, of a chorus-fancier. The imaginative perception of those two lines is the cheapest Parisian *chic*. Again, examine these "two superb stanzas":—

"For love we earth, then serve we all;  
Her mystic secret then is ours;  
We fall, or view our treasures fall,  
Unclouded, as beholds her flowers

"Earth, from a night of frosty wreck,  
Enrobed in morning's mounted fire,  
When lowly, with a broken neck,  
The crocus lays her cheek to mire."

The first line is ambiguous. Do we all serve, or do we serve the all? In the second the use of the epithet "mystic" is in itself sufficient to arouse the darkest suspicions. In the fourth to use "unclouded," presumably for "with unclouded eyes," is a confusing affectation. In the fifth, the carrying over of the subject into this stanza is nothing less than a rhythmical enormity. The whole of the sixth line is an example of pseudo-poetic phrasing. The seventh and eighth—"the crocus with a broken neck"—are intolerable. The whole is a piece of stilted rhetoric with a thin veneer of obscurity for the sake of impressiveness; it is neither simple, nor sensuous, nor passionate.

It is, indeed, high time that the superstition of Meredith as a great poet was systematically exploded. But that is a larger undertaking. What is of immediate interest is that Professor Strong should deliberately set Meredith's poetry on an equality with the Wordsworth which he has before his eyes. For even those who may believe that there is much more to be said for Meredith's poetry than has been said here will admit that the difference between the Wordsworth and the Meredith is an absolute difference. The one is certainly great poetry; the other, whatever it may be, is certainly not that.

The confusion of poetry with that which is not poetry is the fatal end of the search for philosophy in poetry. Wordsworth had a message; Meredith had a message. Therefore Wordsworth and Meredith belong to the same kind. Perhaps they do, as evangelists—though here, truly enough, Professor Strong finds a definite inferiority in Meredith's gospel—but they are not of the same kind as poets, even though Cambridge set the fashion in both of them. And it is as a poet that Wordsworth is remembered, not as a man with a message; his teaching is local, ephemeral, obsolete; his poetry immortal. In other words, it is Wordsworth's exquisite emotions that thrill us now and will thrill generations to come. Solely because he had these exquisite emotions we are interested in his philosophy, his life, his love, his prejudices, in everything about him. The philosophy of Meredith's poetry does not interest us, because the emotions expressed in it are not exquisite; they are simply not memorable at all. As Henry James truly said, there was something irreducibly *bourgeois* about him. That would not necessarily prevent him from being a distinguished novelist in the kind he chose—the comedic spirit is essentially different from the poetic; besides, Meredith's novels are too solid an achievement to be dismissed in a parenthesis—but it did prevent him absolutely from being a great poet, and no amount of philosophy, profound or trivial, could possibly supply the original defect of his sensibility.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY.

## HOW WE WON THE WAR.

✓ **From Private to Field-Marshal.** By Sir WILLIAM ROBERTSON, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., &c. (Constable. 21s.)

✗ THERE is no obvious reason for Sir William Robertson's apparent doubt as to the interest in his book. No other general was so intimately connected with the war for so long a time as he, and the manner of his passing from its direction won for him a unique if a temporary prestige. During practically the whole of the year 1915 he was Chief of Staff in France; and when he left this position it was to become

Chief of the Imperial General Staff and the sole military adviser of the Government, a position he held until February, 1918. It is inevitable that he should have much to say of paramount interest, since it is matter of common knowledge that the Prime Minister could not "get on" with him, and this incompatibility came to a head in his supersession as Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Despite his disclaimer of any intention to raise controversial issues, it is the part of his book dealing with these matters that will be most carefully studied. If we were to credit the preface we should be compelled to believe that Sir William Robertson's book chiefly aims at the instruction and inspiration of our youth, a type of book that is instinctively shunned by all healthy young people. But in point of fact there is sufficient material to enable us to form a judgment on the subjects of disagreement between him and the Prime Minister. These concern methods as well as matter, and it is of the highest importance to have the facts set down, as here, with engaging dispassion. It is probable that the difficulty of the relations between responsible Ministers in a democratic State and their technical advisers will never be resolved. But it must at least be admitted that the present Prime Minister was the exponent of many possible and some incompatible views on the question. Thus, in the Dardanelles Commission, when Mr. Lloyd George was asked "If the experts did not express dissent, did you assume that they assented to what was done?" he replied, "Certainly"; and the conclusion formulated by the Commissioners was "The Chairman and Ministerial members of the War Council looked to the naval and military experts to express their opinions if they dissented from the views put forward by the heads of their respective departments."

This seems sufficiently clear and reasonable; but when Sir William Robertson, at the Versailles Conference in February, 1918, advised against the acceptance of a great Palestine campaign, the Prime Minister, who was in favor of it, was extremely angry. "He said that as I had already informed him of my objections there was no necessity to repeat them at the Conference, and that it was sufficient that he should know them." Though this is a dangerous point of view, there is something to be said for it; but it is completely incompatible with Mr. Lloyd George's position at the Dardanelles Commission. And, of course, ordinary people who are not possessed of the power of mental tumbling cannot be expected to choose more than one of these positions as a rule for future conduct. Thus it came about that when the Prime Minister next played Napoleon at the Supreme Council, his chief adviser, having put down a barrage of cogent memoranda, remained silent at the Council table. His surprise was therefore natural when the Prime Minister made a statement in the Commons on the new arrangement approved by the Versailles Conference in the following terms: "Everybody was free to express his opinion, not merely Ministers but generals. The generals were just as free to express their opinions as the Ministers. . . . I want the House again, at the expense of repeating myself, to recollect that this passed the Versailles Council without a single dissentient voice, as far as all those who were present are concerned, and as far as I know it was completely accepted by every military representative present." This was, of course, untrue; and the graver issue was once again raised. What was an expert to do? If he spoke, Mr. Lloyd George said it was quite unnecessary; if he remained silent, he was adduced as a supporter of a scheme to which he might have been—and even to the Prime Minister's knowledge—vitaly opposed.

It was this disagreement that was the immediate cause of Sir William Robertson's supersession. The Supreme War Council, in order the better to co-ordinate military action, collected a small body of "technical advisers." This, of itself, was inoffensive and unimportant. The French, Italian, and American representatives on this body were all under their respective General Staffs. In the case of the British representative alone was an officer appointed who was not under the General Staff; and as the control of the strategical reserves was to be vested in the technical advisers they thus became an executive body. Sir William Robertson states his objection to the arrangement very forcibly. "In my opinion it was ridiculous to think that control over the strategical reserves could be separated from control over the operations as a whole." This condition was secured while



the technical adviser was the Chief of Staff or his nominee; but it was violated by making him independent of the Chief of Staff. These views were approved by Sir Douglas Haig and Generals Foch and Pétain; but the Prime Minister had his way, and he terminated the discussion on returning to England by superseding Sir William Robertson. The latter's objection to the arrangement was, in a word, that in the pretended desire to secure unity of control and efficient direction of the armies on the Western Front, which was now known to be threatened as never before, it effected a dual control so far as the British Army was concerned, and this could only cause confusion. Sir William Robertson was offered the position at Versailles; and eventually he was even offered the position of Chief of the Imperial General Staff under the new conditions. If he accepted either, he connived at a division of control when it was imperative that control should be individual and unconditioned. He rejected both and became Commander-in-Chief of the Eastern Command, a minor post; and, though many must have thought his position unintelligible, he won the respect of all who give principles the first place.

But, of course, Sir William Robertson's last disagreement with the Prime Minister was not the whole of his offence. Mr. Lloyd George had acted on the well-tryed principle *divide et impera*. The double control was designed so that he might get his own way. Sir William Robertson was an incorrigible Westerner; but in this generalization must be found some room for the fact that he sent Maude to Mesopotamia and organized victory both there and in Palestine. Westernism as expounded by Sir William Robertson, and, it may be pertinently said, by THE NATION, insisted on the paramountcy of the Western Front, and maintained that its needs should be attended to before dispatching troops and material elsewhere. They who opposed this "argued that our best policy in future would be to attack the enemy not where he was strongest, namely, on the West Front, but where he was weakest." Sir William Robertson points out that unless "we could in the meantime pin the strong to his present positions" the attempt to fight the weak "might merely lead to fighting the latter (the strong) in another place." But Mr. Lloyd George and those who agreed with him refused to accept so obvious a truth. In January, 1917, they were bent on defeating Austria; but while General Cadorna was working out the details of the plan, General Nivelle's specific was adopted. In October Alexandretta loomed more seductively than ever above the horizon. At the meeting of the Supreme Council in February, 1918, already referred to, it was decided that Allenby should aim at putting Turkey out of the war by continuing his campaign in Palestine, "subject to the West Front being made secure." This, fortunately, left the matter much as it was; and we were saved from the other mad adventures, which would have done much to starve us into defeat by eating up transport, by the stolid opposition of Sir William Robertson.

Of course, he was no genius. His career would hardly have been so successful if he had been. Such success as his is only built on the ability to convince your immediate colleagues of your competence, and this can only be achieved when your own level of intelligence is not appreciably higher than theirs. His remarks upon the Battle of Loos leave one to gather that in his opinion there was little remediable fault in it; and as he was Chief of Staff in France he must be held largely, if not wholly, responsible for the constitution, disposition, and treatment of the reserves. This aspect of the battle represents a sort of distilled horror, and it had better be left to pass into oblivion. Again, Sir William Robertson saw the official trial of the first tank in February, 1916, and although he ordered a hundred before he left the ground, he no more than any other prominent general appreciated at the time that this invention had restored the weapon of surprise to the Allies, and rendered such shambles as Ypres and Loos into dreadful history having little bearing on the still existing problem of German trenches and machine guns.

His power of thought is ordinary, of organization not remarkable. But he possesses to a degree that comes near to genius an engaging, a devastating simplicity. He is loyal, generous, brave. In passing, he helps to put an old

fiction about Lord Kitchener at rest. When the question of making him Chief of the Imperial General Staff came up, we find that Lord Kitchener was willing to resign and support him as a member of the War Council, rather than lose him through inability to agree to the ambitious but quite logical demands he made. He has, moreover, the prejudices of the class in which he moves, as witness the remarks on the Curragh incident. But in the end we feel inevitably that it was well for us that the Prime Minister, with his gambling propensity to improvise at a moment's notice, found so solid an exponent of the safe if not the short way to victory. Quite apart from this episode which saw Sir William Robertson for a time in the front of the world's stage, there is much that is of interest in his book.

#### ✓ — INTREPID GOSSIP.

**A Political Pilgrim in Europe.** By Mrs. PHILIP SNOWDEN. (Cassell. 7s. 6d. net.)

Mrs. PHILIP SNOWDEN, intrepid, candid, chatty, once more entertains us with her observations on the social and political conditions of Central Europe. Her present volume will, however, attract less popular attention than her last, since its incitement is less to censure than to pity; and her chapters on Bolshevik Russia, containing little that is new, are among the least interesting in the book. Mrs. Snowden reminds us again of her dislike for extreme revolutionary theory and practice, strews some old ground with fresh epithets, and gives us a picture of Tchitcherin, whose manner, "shrinking and full of a timid courtesy," suggested the "gentle and refined artist, the man of taste and leisure, rather than the master of foreign affairs of a country the size of Europe."

If Mrs. Snowden found much to criticize in the Spartan despotism of Moscow, for the gallant little Socialist Republic of Georgia, to whose invitation to visit and advise delegates from the Second International gratefully responded last year, she has nothing but praise. With the mountain ranges and incorruptible democracy of Switzerland without its hotels, the high living and musical tastes of Hungary without its terrors, the peaches and oranges of California without its cans, Georgia of the Caucasus, famous for its beautiful women and "superbly handsome men, passionate in love and brave in war," seems, indeed, almost too good to be true. The delegates could find no flaw in a constitution which united Proportional Representation, Adult Suffrage, and five women Members of Parliament, with municipal banquets "which for the completeness of appointments could not have been surpassed by the most expensive mountain hotel in America," and royal trains for visitors "replete with every modern comfort." Nor could they criticize a social system whose nobility, tricked out in all the splendors of the most fantastic Russian ballet, danced national dances to the accompaniment of national music for the diversion of the delegates; whilst a free peasantry, combining "excellent co-operative movements" with Patriarchal ceremonies, followed them blowing kisses and flinging red roses before their chariot wheels. The Georgians, in the opinion of the delegates, were hostile to Bolshevism, and desired for economic reasons and purposes of mutual defence a Federation of Caucasian Republics. Unfortunately, since this chapter was written their wishes and the advice of their sympathizers have been overruled.

Mrs. Snowden's chapters on Dying Austria and her visit to Berlin indict again, if that was necessary, the evils of the Peace Treaty:—

"Crime, corruption, and dishonesty are the awful first fruits of famine in all the countries of Central Europe. It is the calamity that the best people everywhere most lament. German students must fasten their caps and coats to their pegs with chains. Boots and shoes must not be left outside hotel doors in Poland. Sheets and blankets have been stolen off the hotel beds in Vienna. Railway trucks disappear regularly in Roumania and Russia. Bribery is the order of the day."

After a nightmare journey lasting two days and two nights, Mrs. Snowden reached Vienna from Berne in September, 1919. At that date the effects of starvation on the

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In the early part of this year, the firm of Pope & Bradley was charged with profiteering. Being the singular proprietor of this plural personality, I appeared, and defended my own case. It appealed to my ironical sense of humour.

The firm was charged with charging (which is immediately combative) eighteen guineas for a lounge suit. And it really did seem an awful lot. Conducting the case myself before a perfectly stupid Tribunal, I proved conclusively that the net profit on this suit was 7s. 8d. But with British phlegm and asthma and mental astigmatism they were unable to comprehend my simple mathematics. So they gave the case against me and ordered a refund of £2 2s., saying they thought eighteen guineas was too high a price for any suit. I told them I was amazed at their decision and should appeal.

I took the case to the Court of Appeal at Spring Gardens, and, finding intelligence there, of course, I won. Had I not done so I should have taken the case to the House of Lords, or to heaven, or even to the more populated place.

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population of Vienna were plainly visible, although its surface then, as now, could easily deceive the undiscerning stranger. Mrs. Snowden noticed the numbers of gross people eating enormous meals at exorbitant prices at the restaurants, the full attendance at the opera, and the luxury and comfort in which the foreigners and Allied Commissioners were enabled to live. But she also visited the hospitals and sanatoriums where the victims of the famine were exposed, and heard and saw many heartrending revelations of want and misery. In 1919 the Relief Missions from various countries had already got to work; Mrs. Snowden saw the public feeding centres of America, the clinics and hospitals taken over by the Society of Friends, and the trainloads of children—six hundred a week—making their way to the haven of hospitable Switzerland. She did not see, however, the interior of any middle-class home—the family of an admiral, for instance, or of a professor at the University, whose endeavors to live decently on the income of a London crossing-sweeper are among the most pathetic of all the hidden tragedies of Vienna.

In Austria and Germany, indeed, the very virtues of the people conspire against the sympathy of strangers. "Your people come to Germany," said Herr Dernburg to Mrs. Snowden in Berlin, "and report that we are pretending to be poor."

"They see our good clothes, neatly brushed, and our generally tidy appearance, and they say that Germany is better clothed than they are. They do not realize that we are reaping now the reward of our habit of thrift. The clothes that we are wearing are many years old, taken out of wardrobes and altered as best might be to suit the fashion of the hour. Women's dresses are frequently made out of the dyed linen, bed and table; many of our children wear paper clothes or garments woven of grasses."

To these and more searching accusations Mrs. Snowden listened as penitently as possible; but when Herr Dernburg followed with the pre-peace promises of Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Lloyd George, she cried out that England's breach of faith "hurt her as much as it did him."

"'No, no,' he said, sharply, 'not so much, not nearly so much. It has hurt your pride, but it is killing our children. Where is the comparison?' And he turned away in disgust."

Mrs. Snowden visited Constantinople, Sweden, the Balkans, and Rome, and her last two chapters deal with Ireland. Her cure for the world tragedy lies in the application of the principles of "the right kind" of Internationalism. On the necessity of Internationalism she pins her faith. But what is "the right kind"? Mrs. Snowden is not so sure.

#### "PASSING BY" AND OTHERS.

**Passing By.** By MAURICE BARING. (Secker. 7s. 6d.)

**The Souls of Poor Folk.** By Dr. ALEXANDER IRVINE. (Collins. 7s. 6d. net.)

**The Right Voice.** By CLARE CORBETT. (Bale. 6s. net.)

In "Passing By" Mr. Baring, by an ingenious contrivance of extracts from a diary and one side of a correspondence, gives us first and last the love story of a most amiable soul. Not the least skilful and alluring element in the whole work is the unobtrusiveness of this theme. Other themes are, with the natural course of events, allowed to grow up and outvie all the rest, and then again their place is taken for a period by others. The quiet, precise, and cautious Godfrey Mellor, indeed, writer of the diary which we are permitted to see, and devotee of the beautiful Mrs. Housman, is never in the limelight. That is often thrown on another and less enigmatic devotee. While everyone knows, pretends to know, or wants to know the last word on the Ayton-Housman episode, no one appears to realize, even to suspect, the attitude of Mellor. His story may best be hinted at in two quotations which he makes in his diary. The first is that old song from Thomas Ford's "Music of Sundry Kinds":—

"There is a ladye sweet and kind,  
Was never face so pleas'd my mind,  
I did but see her passing by,  
And yet I love her till I die."

The other, which closes the book, is from Thomas à Kempis: "Whosoever is not ready to suffer all things and to stand

resigned to the will of his beloved is not worthy to be called a lover." There is a touch of greatness in Mellor, who is in every way moved by steady ideals, and what amounts to heroism. He is "of that quiet kind whose natures never vary," and the only criticism or symptom of it that he makes upon his rival is, "I find A's spirits a little boisterous at times."

Mr. Baring is the artist throughout; he keeps unwaveringly to the limitations that must accompany the form which he has chosen. It is an excellent piece of literal perpetuation. The title may be taken to have another significance than that of the love drama; for the work is a document of manners and opinion in a particular social sphere a few years ago. For in all the punctilio of the life with which he is concerned, Mr. Baring has maintained a valuable patience. Never carried away by the development of his situations, he always has time to add some incident to divert. The minor characters are well drawn and neatly introduced. Such are Uncle Arthur, a fine old fellow, who is mostly, in discussion, years late and worlds astray, and the tiresome Mrs. Fairburn, who studies the effect of incorrect English adorned with her "Poveretto's" and "E vero's?"

Dr. Irvine takes us into far other surroundings and other problems. His book is a series of studies drawn from his reminiscences of his early life in Antrim. "The percentage of those," he writes, "who were chronically hungry in our community was small. My people were of that percentage, and yet we never whined over our lot." Dr. Irvine writes warm-heartedly and with great frankness, never lacking his good story and his interesting "character." In that Tom Sawyer-ish boyhood there was pathos as well as humor, and there was joy, too, which, it appears, is disseminated among all ranks. With a tinge of the over-sentimental here and there—but only a tinge—Dr. Irvine succeeds in making us share with him these records of the struggle to live of a kindly people.

From Ulster fifty years ago, "The Right Voice" removes us to Western Clare of 1918. It is described as "a tale of fact and fantasy," but is more evidently a succession of speeches on the questions that affect Ireland. Love stories of easy type serve as interludes between long and dreary pictures of Ireland in the past, present, and future. The author's opinions on the situation are not our own, but if they were, our taste in diatribe is insufficient to enjoy a novel principally composed of them. The book is the product of a sincere mind, but we feel, as novel readers, that we have been the victims of a trick.

## Foreign Literature.

### THE ADMIRABLE AZORIN.

**Los Dos Luises.** By "AZORIN." (Madrid: Caro Raggio. 4 ptas.)

With this new volume of essays before them, English readers will find that they are still captivated by the admirable "Azorin." There is the same gentle manner, which some have mistaken for weakness; the old vein of sympathy, which is sometimes miscalled sentimentalism. As Sr. Ortega Gasset said in the "Espectador," his writings are like a closed room in which someone has left a bunch of violets: "Sus libros, tan delicados y trémulos, huelen siempre á cuarto cerrado—donde alguien, es cierto, dejó olvidadas unas violetas." But one cannot always read or write out of doors. "Azorin" approaches people in some characteristic occupation—doing something which they like doing. In the essay on Don Francisco Giner, "Azorin" presented that master and model of future generations as on a walking tour in the Sierra Guadarrama, sitting on a rock and eating his lunch. ("Lecturas Españolas," Ed. Nelson.) On the present occasion he encounters his subjects in their studies and cells. He is not one of those who go into a writer's most private recesses, and, not finding him there, make a mere catalogue of his belongings. "Azorin" always finds people at home. He discovers the intimate spirit of a man, and conveys it to you with surprising fidelity; indeed, there can be few who



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have not understood a Spanish writer the better after reading what "Azorín" has to say about him.

His latest collection of essays is called "Los Dos Luises"—Fray Luis de Granada and Fray Luis de León. When he writes about Luis de León, it is interesting to compare him with Professor Fitzmaurice-Kelly. They approach their subject from different angles; but both angles are necessary, for one is the complement of the other. Professor Fitzmaurice-Kelly would be the first to admit—as he does admit—that his recently published essay is little more than the sketch of a book which he is never likely to complete. We only wish that he would complete it; but he has confined himself to an examination of the Inquisition documents, and the question of the chronological order of the poems. "Azorín" begins where Professor Fitzmaurice-Kelly leaves off. He says nothing about the Inquisition, but he will make people read the poems more carefully than they have done hitherto; and though he admits that a modern reader may get stuck in the "Nombres del Cristo," he recommends everyone, not only the devout, to read the "Perfecta Casada"—for the same reasons that we should recommend a Spaniard to read Jeremy Taylor.

In the essay on the other Luis, Fray Luis de Granada, there is no attempt at describing the appearance of the man. His point of view, his mental attitude, is what interests "Azorín." Don't be frightened by the literary historians! Take a volume of his down from the shelf (that is, if you are lucky enough to find a library of Spanish books where you can take down a volume from the shelf—not even the Spanish Club in London has learnt that English people read books standing, and hate the idea of getting someone to come and unlock the bookcase for them!)—take a volume and read it standing for a few minutes. You will be unlucky if you do not find something human and worth remembering, though if you take the volume to a chair you will inevitably go to sleep. After all, there was something more than devout rhetoric in the short-sighted little man, who had the prints on the walls of his cell framed with green mounts, so that he might be able to see them the more easily.

In another essay "Azorín" is right to protest against the fashion of giving prominence to the picaresque elements in Cervantes, to the neglect of the more idealistic. This especially applies to the "Exemplary Novels." He, like some of us too, grows tired of the thieves'-kitchen business in "Rinconete y Cortadillo"; and puts in a plea for other stories: "El Amante Liberal," "La Fuerza del Sangre," "La Señora Cornelia," and "La Española Inglesa"—those which (we are speaking from memory) Mabbe chose for translation into English in 1640 as being the better, or possessing a more universal appeal than the others. Spanish picaresque literature is of unending interest for customs, and not least for musical customs; but manners and customs do not make a novel, even a novel of manners.

"Azorín" has always been interested in the feeling for nature as exhibited in Spanish literature, and the connection between literature and landscape. One of his earlier books, "El Paisaje de España visto por los Españoles," is entirely devoted to the landscape of Spain as seen by the Spaniards themselves; and it is a book which no one should miss who is thinking of going to Spain. In his fantasy on Cervantes' exemplary novel, "El Licenciado Vidriera," he says:—

"¿Cómo podremos sentir el paisaje de Castilla, si no sentimos a Luis de León, a Cervantes, a Lope, a Garcilaso? Y con el paisaje habremos de sentir también la larga cadena de antecesores nuestros que sobre este mismo suelo han sufrido nuestros mismos dolores y han hecho, con sus sensaciones, que poco a poco se haya ido formando esta sensibilidad nuestra de ahora."

Admirable "Azorín"! True to his generation, which is the Spanish generation of 1898, he has never ceased to show that the heritage of his people lies in Spain and in Spanish literature. "He writes for men with bourgeois minds," say some. It will be no bad thing if some of these minds, in other countries besides Spain, can acquire something of his rather shy distinction of manner and his limpidity of thought.

J. B. T.

## Books in Brief.

**Tired Radicals.** By WALTER E. WEYL. (New York: Huebsch. \$1.50.)

THIS brilliant little volume is a measure of the loss American journalism has suffered by Mr. Weyl's death. His "New Democracy" was one of the first signs that the economic problems of America were being considered from the angle of creative liberalism, just as his book on the war moved to the point where Radicals ceased to find comfort in President Wilson's impotent idealism. One of the first editors of the "New Republic," he did much by his own interpretative insight to give that journal its high place among the organs of American progressive opinion. A man of wide reading, hardly less intimate with Europe and the Far East than with the United States itself, he was singularly well equipped for the kind of work he had undertaken. Endowed with infinite patience and tact, he had the happy gift of eliciting the knowledge he desired as easily from trade union leaders as from Cabinet Ministers. It may be doubted whether there is more than a handful of men in America to-day who could make exactly the contribution to its understanding of which he was capable.

The present book consists of a dozen short papers, mostly reprinted from different journals, with the addition of a chapter from an unfinished volume on social structure. All of them are able pieces of interpretation; and the description of Mr. Smillie's cross-examination of the dukes before the Coal Commission is a masterpiece of effective reporting. What dominates the whole book is Mr. Weyl's perception of the final part played by economic motives in social life, together with his not less vivid insistence that society is always trying, though as a rule failing, to overcome that materialism. The essay which gives its title to the book is a singularly felicitous piece of social psychology; the analysis of the slow erosion of radicalism as responsibilities accumulate and age advances is made with acute observation. The division of Radicals into those so professing by environment and those so called by temper is admirable, and the happy characterization of the latter as men who "would be rebels in Paradise and reformers in the Garden of Eden," has a truth we too easily forget. Certainly an inquiry into the really final causes which led certain intellectuals into the Communist Party would be most interesting. It would be difficult, too, to find a more excellent description of the English aristocracy as it impinges on an American than in the paper (written in 1911) called "The Crumbling House of Lords." One who has seen much of Mr. Wilson at first hand may perhaps remark that the portrait of him at Paris is not surpassed in brilliance even by Mr. Keynes's unforgettable sentences.

\* \* \*

**Mystic Isles of the South Seas.** By FREDERICK O'BRIEN. (Hodder & Stoughton. 20s. net.)

MR. O'BRIEN went to Tahiti and Moorea with one thought—to play. Those who have read his "White Shadows in the South Seas" know how thoroughly he can play and how excellently he can write about it. He soon has the reader in Tahiti. He was leaning over the cat-head when there came a new and delicious odor. There was a dim shadow in the far offing, "a dark speck in the lofty clouds, a mass of towering green upon the blue water, the vast unfoldment of emerald, pale hills and glittering reef." That is the spirit and measure of this book. Mr. O'Brien is moved by the beauty of it all—the beauty of the men and women, as well as the beauty of the siren island. He is, too, an entertaining teller of stories which he picked up by the dozen in his gossip with the natives. In his idling he has acquired much information for the folklorist and scientist. The woman of Tahiti pursues the man she wants as the man does the woman. "She is on a par with the man in seeking," said an educated and travelled belle to Mr. O'Brien, "without fear and without shame. I have told some of those suffrage ladies of London and Washington that we are in advance of their most determined feminism. They will come to it. More women than men in Europe will bring it there." Mr. Shaw says they came to it long ago.

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**The Silk Industry of the United Kingdom: Its Origin and Development.** By Sir FRANK WARNER, K.B.E.  
(Drane. 42s. net.)

THE discovery of the utility of silk for manufacture must be credited to the Chinese—like many other inventions—and from them it spread to Persia, India, and the East generally. Silk was woven in Byzantium in the sixth century, and in the ninth the Moors took sericulture to Spain. It was Italy, however, which set the fashion and almost monopolized the silk trade for Western Europe, and it was not until the end of the sixteenth century that England ceased to rely upon Italian supplies. One of the earliest records for England is King Offa of Mercia's acceptance of two silken vests from Charlemagne in 790, and by the middle of the thirteenth century the wearing of silk was general in the West, Matthew Paris, in 1251, writing that a thousand knights were clad in vestments of silk at the festivities of the marriage of the daughter of Henry III. to Alexander, King of Scotland. The silk industry has, since the Middle Ages, covered a very wide area, but owing to difficulties in procuring cheap labor and a good water supply, it was never integrated, and this lack of cohesion has, in the end, led to its decline. Sir Frank Warner (whose family has been in the trade since 1870) has written a very copious and interesting historical, economic, political, and technical account of the silk industry. It is divided into four books dealing with silk manufacture from every possible point of view, and the many topics touched into life through the association of silk with the general textile industries range from the medieval manuscript to the revolt of the workers against the introduction of the power loom. Silk designs only developed after the mechanical inventions of the eighteenth century, and Sir Frank Warner pays a deserved tribute to the raising of commercial standards in design owing to the Arts and Crafts movement. The book includes histories of the towns and companies connected with the silk industry.

**The Psychology of Industry.** By JAMES DREVER. (Methuen. 5s.)

DR. DREVER, lecturing on this subject in a Scottish manufacturing town, heard afterwards that a criticism passed by a working man was that "it was not psychology but common sense." He was encouraged by this compliment to make a "common sense" exposition of the applied psychology of industry and commerce, and within the space at his disposal has accomplished this well. He advances nothing that is new to those who have studied the subject, which has been treated largely of late, notably by Mr. Frank Watts, whose book was noticed recently in these columns. But Dr. Drever describes the important tests and conclusions, and his volume can be commended to the general reader if not to the student.

**The Royal and Bishops' Palaces in Old London.** By WILBERFORCE JENKINSON. (S.P.C.K. 10s. net.)

MR. JENKINSON writes of old London before the Great Fire, basing his narrative mainly upon quotations from writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is not a work of reconstruction, like the recent one by Mr. Bell, but it is an entertaining anthology and provides a useful supplement to more ambitious histories. A good index and bibliography are appended.

## From the Publishers' Table.

MESSRS. CHAPMAN & HALL announce a new book of travel, "Alone," by Mr. Norman Douglas; Mr. C. K. Scott Moncrieff's version of "Beowulf"; and a survey of "The Art of Illustration" from Dürer to Phil May, by Mr. E. J. Sullivan. A new publishing house is that of Messrs. Chapman & Dodd, who intend to issue, from 25, Denmark Street, "cheap reprints of famous books," but who have in hand also several new publications.

MR. J. C. SQUIRE, it is understood, is to bring out his "Poems: Second Series" in the near future. Mr. Edgell Rickword has in the press a collection of poems from periodicals and some others, to be published as his first volume of verse by Messrs. Sidgwick & Jackson.

MR. ALFRED A. KNOPF informs us of a pleasing error regarding "A Chinese Anthology," which Mr. Witter Bynner is preparing. The book is to consist of 300 translated poems, but the evil genius of typography has announced the number as 11,300. Mr. Bynner writes: "Having been at work already over three years on the 300—observing, a good part of the time, a nine-hour day, I cannot look upon the larger figure without a sinking of the heart."

MR. KNOPF is issuing in America Mr. H. M. Tomlinson's "London River" and Mr. Robert Graves's "Pier-Glass," as well as "The Borough Treasurer," by Mr. J. S. Fletcher. The last-named writer, who has published several works on the history of Yorkshire besides his novels, has in the press, and to be published forthwith by Messrs. Allen & Unwin, a set of biographical essays entitled "Yorkshiresmen of the Restoration." Something of the kind, it will be remembered, was attempted by Hartley Coleridge in his "Northern Worthies," by no means the least rewarding of neglected books.

THE "Bookman's Journal" returns, converted into a monthly magazine and thoroughly interesting. Mr. Clement Shorter leads the way with recollections of Meredith and still thinks him "the most admirable man of letters I have ever met"; and of the articles which succeed probably the most striking is that by Mr. Herbert Garland on the Roger Bacon Cipher MS. This extraordinary manuscript, which has baffled interpretation hitherto, is reported to have yielded its secret to Dr. Romaine Newbold of Pennsylvania; appears to record (in its 800,000 words) scientific experiments and deductions; and shows, for instance, that Roger Bacon used the officially uninvented microscope in the thirteenth century.

AMONG booksellers Mr. C. Millard (8, Abercorn Place, N.W. 8) pursues an individual way. He it was who collected all the editions of "Dorian Gray" into one vast assemblage; his new catalogue ranges over various of the moderns. Here are the proofs of "Old Calabria"; an overlooked and presumably piratical edition of "Barrack-Room Ballads"; numerous books by men of the 'nineties with letters inserted; and a presentation copy of John Clare's "Shepherd's Calendar."

MOST bookmen have a weakness for those volumes of miscellaneous pamphlets or plays which careful predecessors have had bound up; and though they are best unannounced, with all the possibilities of discovery to them, yet they are full of interest in any catalogue. Messrs. Dobell's 304th list from Charing Cross Road has several of them; and of eighteenth-century plays so collected into volumes. We look

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in vain for "Vertumnus and Pomona," the dramatic effusion of Lamb's congenial schoolmaster Matthew Field; but doubtless it will emerge some day. Another work familiar through Lamb, the "Fortunate Blue-Coat Boy," is at length before us; but not, unfortunately, the copy with which he whiled away his and Field's time.

THE other book catalogues of the moment include that of Mr. Chaundy (Oxford), who offers many duplicates collected a century since by Robert Finch, an antiquary; and Mr. Francis Edwards's 419th, wherein he continues his literary travels round the world by way of Mexico, Central and South America. The entries under "Raleigh" are conspicuous, such as an A.L.S. to Sir John Gilbert, and a contemporary manuscript bearing upon his enterprise to Guiana.

THE rejuvenation of two ancient and deserted Suffolk tenements is described with many illustrations in "An Old Cottage Saved," a pamphlet prepared by Mr. A. R. Powys for the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. It is a record of a very pleasing piece of work, for after four hundred years of service these dwellings—and there are many like them in the district—had fallen into a forbidding dereliction. They now appear likely to add to their tale of centuries. The object of the Society was to exemplify the economy and beauty of reconstructing old dwellings as against building new, and the balance-sheet of the romance thoroughly justifies the work.

THE Clarendon Press have issued Part III. of the "Supplement to the Anglo-Saxon Dictionary" begun by the late Dr. Bosworth and continued by Professor T. Northcote Toller.

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"The Gondoliers," it must be owned, is not among Gilbert's plays the one most typical of his genius. For that we should have undoubtedly to choose "Iolanthe." There are even traces of fatigue. Marco and Giuseppe and Antonio and Gianetta and Tessa and Fiametta—the names are a confession—foreshadow the blank heroes and heroines of musical comedy. They are not Gilbertians. On the other hand, Gilbert here succeeds, and one doubts if he has succeeded anywhere else, in creating a living man as opposed to an ingenious monster. We allude, of course, to the Duke of Plaza Toro. Is he not the most lovable of all bankrupts since Micawber? There is nothing about him that does not extort our sympathy—his pecuniary misfortunes, undeserved we are sure; his difficulty in making head against his Duchess and his adorable shrew of a daughter; his irrepressible buoyancy under the strokes of Fate; his soaring idealism so painfully at odds with the weakness of the flesh; and with it all and through it all his imperturbable good-humor. It is a good thing to see Mr. Lytton in the part again, and he has never played it with more mellowness. He has in Mr. Millidge a Luiz who makes up to the last touch like an eighteenth-century print; in Miss Bertha Lewis the most classical of

Duchesses once again—her Dick Turpinesque, three-cornered riding-hat in the first scene is an awesome new weapon of offence though; and in Miss Helen Gilliland a dainty Casilda. But then could anyone fail as Casilda?

If you are looking for real Gilbertianism in "The Gondoliers," you must turn, of course, to the Grand Inquisitor. It is a pity Mr. Leo Sheffield (memorable as the best, most crystal-clear of Pish-Tushes) should think it needful to hold so fast to the Billington tradition. For Billington, if it is not too impious to say so, was never the least bit like Don Alhambra. This creature is embodied *raison d'état* or he is nothing. He is not at all a benevolent old buffer. He regards the loves and fears and hates, the births and marriages and deaths of those units of administration commonly called men and women as the buzzing of gnats. *Esse est administrari* is his philosophy. And he is impartial. If he supplies the prisoners waiting in the ante-room to the torture-chamber with "all the illustrated papers," it is because they deserve it. They fulfil their function by being tortured. He perceives, Hegelianly, that they establish the truth of the social order by their very negation of it. There is a strict limit to his unbending. The man may realize out of the corner of his eye that the Duke of Plaza Toro's daughter is "jimp": that fact does not exist for the Inquisitor.

But perhaps the most curious thing about this, as about all Gilbert's work, is the surprising bitterness of these puppets. How ghastly, really, are their grins! With what grinding pain their joints are jerked! Here you have the dear Duke, and his tattered drummer, and his proud child, and that gorgeous grotesque, the Inquisitor, all together, and suddenly the whole fabric of absurdity is ripped across by the poignant appeal to "Death, the great unraveller," and the knell-like lyric "Try we lifelong ——" How dark and deep was the ultimate riddle of Gilbert's philosophy! Perhaps this is brought out by the more delicate and poetic mounting which the operas now receive. The Goldoni dresses of this revival are many of them delightful, though the Napoleonic helmets of the Duke's halberdiers are an incongruity. One could wish that the *ensemble* of the performance matched the setting, but there are weak patches. Mr. Derek Oldham, the Marco, sings well; and Miss Catherine Ferguson makes a rather appealing, wild briar-rose Tessa, though her voice has hardly the strength for so large an auditorium. Why does Mr. Jeffrey Toye's conducting, for all its perfection, somehow miss the snap which the veteran Cellier put into these scores? My Brother Dent would explain that (or deny it), and tell us many excellent things neglected here. You would have liked to have his opinion, and so would I. When did ill-gotten gains prosper anyone?

D. L. M.

## Science.

### AN ENTHUSIASTIC PHYSICIST.

It is, we hope, a sign of the times that Dr. Campbell should have written a little book\* for the Workers' Educational Association. Men of science have often evinced a curious predilection for horny-handed audiences. Huxley, it will be remembered, professed a strong preference for a working-class audience as against a comparatively unintelligent audience of "cultured" people. And, in our own time, such men as Professor Soddy look to the Labor Party as more likely to respond to intelligent ideals than are any of the old political parties. It may be that there is some solid ground for this preference; perhaps it is not wholly romantic. It may even be true that there is something in Huxley's contention, and that a workshop acquaintance with the properties of different substances is a better preparation for science than is a knowledge of Greek texts. We are a little sceptical about this argument, however. It is

\* "What is Science?" By Norman Campbell. (Methuen. 5s. net.)



1861-1921

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probable that a literary training is, in itself, no bar to an understanding of the scientific outlook; it is usually accompanied, however, with a whole series of repressions. It sometimes seems as if the exponents of a literary culture cannot hope to appear convincing unless they first show that all other studies are relatively unimportant. It may be true, therefore, that a working-class audience, being uncontaminated by any form of cultural snobbery, makes a more intelligent audience for any non-literary subject. The pathetic reverence displayed by the English working class towards "Professors" and "Great Men" of every species certainly appears sufficiently undiscriminating. This is good soil for an educational campaign, and when the attention becomes a little less awestruck and a little more critical we may hope for a genuine public interest in science.

In the meantime, there exists the educated working-man, that somewhat formidable creature who is the chief devourer, we are informed, of those innumerable books on economics which stream steadily from the press. It is chiefly for him, we suppose, that Dr. Campbell intends his book. It would be interesting to reconstruct, from the present volume, the characteristics of this hypothetical reader. He has, we gather, a certain interest in philosophy, but the philosophy he is interested in is emphatically of the kind that Mr. Joad would call "common-sense." The fine-spun sophistries which delight the readers of "Mind" receive short shrift in Dr. Campbell's pages. That perpetual wrangle about the external and the internal, the objective and the subjective, is here resolved by the plain statement that "external" happenings can secure general agreement. If, being in a certain condition, you see snakes crawling over your bed, you cannot convince other people that the snakes exist. If, however, an electric-light bulb breaks, plunging a room in darkness, you can secure general agreement as to what has happened. The vigor of this solution will probably shock the philosopher, and it is indeed, we think, open to doubt. But it prepares the way for Dr. Campbell's definition of science as "the study of those judgments concerning which universal agreement can be obtained." This is the definition which was elaborated in his big book, "Physics: The Elements," and he there showed that these judgments are those of "before and after," of coincidences in space, and of the number of objects in a collection. These are the judgments fundamental in physical science; all experimental observations proceed from them; they are the simplest imaginable, and universal agreement can be obtained for them. There is obviously much truth in this analysis, although a full discussion would have to consider the manner in which the ideas of Relativity could be accommodated with this view.

And then, after this pleasant and stimulating dose of philosophy, our educated working-man is led into a discussion on laws and theories. Perhaps the most arresting part of Dr. Campbell's treatment of this subject consists in his view of what he calls "The Significance of Genius." He appears to think that the universe, in some way, obeys the dictates of genius. A scientific genius creates science as truly as an artist creates art. He finds a real parallel between Newton's theory of Gravitation and Beethoven's C-minor Symphony. The fall of an apple was transmuted by Newton's imagination into the theory of Universal Attraction, as the knocking at a door was transformed by Beethoven into a symphony. Both creations, Dr. Campbell points out, had to be tested. Both had to secure assent. Here, again, we find Dr. Campbell's analysis insufficient. We think that the educated working-man will be vaguely conscious that something is being slurred over in the discussion. Dr. Campbell is undoubtedly right to emphasize the personal element that exists in a great scientific theory; it is an aspect of science which has been altogether too much neglected, chiefly, as Dr. Campbell says, through the mistaken efforts of scientific men to present science as *sans peur et sans reproche* by eliminating as much humanity from it as possible. The result has been the sincere, but completely unreal, division of knowledge into Science and the Humanities. There is only one subject, and that is the Humanities. But, unless we are willing

to become mystics, we cannot either diminish the objective element in Newton's theory or the subjective element in Beethoven's symphony. It is not much more than a figure of speech to say that an artistic genius penetrates to some otherwise inaccessible and independent reality, and it is surely not much more than a figure of speech to say that the universe obeys the scientific imagination. Even on the extreme Relativity position there are certain elements, independent of the scientific mind, which condition the combinations which Dr. Campbell calls "laws." But although we think that he has here over-emphasized an important truth, we are thoroughly in accord with the spirit of what he says. If science is ever to do all it is able to do for mankind its real nature must be understood, and in nothing is its real nature so misconceived as in what we may call its human element. Dr. Campbell goes on to speak of the æsthetic delights afforded by the study of science; he compares the following of a great scientific theory with the reading of a poem or the hearing of great music. This also is quite true, although there will probably always be occasion for regret that so few people, comparatively, are able to enjoy this particular branch of æsthetics.

In his final chapter, on the applications of science, Dr. Campbell emphasizes the simple, but important, point that science is concerned wholly with means and not with ends. If science makes war more horrible and produces towns like Bolton, the blame does not rest with science. The blame rests with those stupid and evil men who use scientific means to bring about such ends. Science will save life or take it with an equal indifference; it is for us to decide what we want science to do.

S.

## Exhibitions of the Week.

**Leicester Galleries:** Paintings and Water-Colors by C. R. W. NEVINSON.

MR. NEVINSON has certainly broken loose this time, and, indeed, it is pleasant to observe him waving adieu (in the Preface to his catalogue) to certain melancholy pedants of the past. In this exhibition the real gaiety and freshness of his mind begin to come forth. His war pictures, good as most of them were, were always a little disquieting. There were various devices of drawing and design abroad at those times, with which this artist was more than familiar, and he claimed to use them as he thought appropriate. It was cleverly done, but we began to be afraid lest the artist himself might disappear under all this eclecticism. It was doubtful whether these "aids to vision" (for they were little else) could be picked up and laid down as occasion seemed to call for; they had some vitality in the brains of their inventors, but they very quickly degenerated into the most dismal academicism. It is certain that most of his war pictures that remain in the memory are those in which he saw (and allowed one to see) with his own singularly clear eyes.

Nearly all his work in this exhibition attracts at once by its directness and sincerity. Some of it seems experimental—indeed, the brush seems to move almost with stiffness, and a certain *naïveté* appears which has a charm of its own in an artist of his experience—like a man of letters taking to poetry (when his poetry is good). The portrait heads in water-color are the least successful: they all seem rather vague and uncertain, masks without the dormant vitality that can be imparted to masks. Two especially of the water-color landscapes are really brilliant, "Le Pont Royal" (No. 36) and "Les Jardins du Luxembourg" (No. 32). The wires and girders of "Brooklyn Bridge" (No. 16) are rather taking; it is a good painting, if somewhat reminiscent of the rather tiresome mechanism of an abandoned past. The effect is so easy and obvious when compared with the real grasp and success of such paintings as "An English Landscape" (No. 17) and "Le Pont des Arts" (No. 18). Such work as this shows the real strength of the artist: a fine, clear talent, unaided by the devices and subterfuges of simplification, and without the stimulus of the temporary emotions of war.

E. S.

